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The First in loftineſs of thought Surpaſs'd,
The Next in Majeſty; in both the Laſt.
The force of Nature could no farther goe:
To make a Third she joynd the former two.

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L'ALLEGRO, IL PENSEROSO, COMUS, AND LYCIDAS.

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PREFACE.

No conscientious worker can edit or annotate any portion of the Poetical Works of Milton without an acknowledgment of his indebtedness to David Masson, who devoted a score of years to his voluminous edition of the life and works of John Milton. The large size of Masson's edition puts it out of the reach of the ordinary student. The present work, while it follows in the footsteps of the nobler scholar in text, and for the most part takes his dictum in disputed renderings, aims to cover only those points that are necessary to an intelligent study of the poems included in its pages.

Thanks are extended to Dr. Rice of the Springfield Public Library, and Superintendent Cutter of the Boston Athenæum, for many courtesies in the way of library facilities during the preparation of this little volume.

L. M. H.

MARCH, 1893.

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CONTEMPORANEOUS LYRIC POETS.

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THOMAS CAREW, 1589–1639.
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SIR JOHN SUCKLING, 1608–1642.
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WILLIAM DRUMMOND, 1585–1649.
GEORGE HERBERT, 1592–1634.
JEREMY TAYLOR (a lyric poet who wrote his lyrics in prose), 1613–1667.
RICHARD CRASHAW, 1615–1650.
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ANDREW MARVELL, 1621–1678.
SAMUEL BUTLER, 1612–1680.
JOHN DRYDEN, 1631–1700.

REFERENCES FOR THE STUDY OF MILTON.

MASSON'S The Life and Times of John Milton.
MASSON'S Milton's Poetical Works.
STOPFORD BROOKE'S Milton.
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WALTER BAGEHOT'S Literary Studies (Milton Essays).
MACAULAY'S Essay on Milton.
LOWELL'S Essay on Milton.
BIRRELL'S Obiter Dicta (Second Series) Essay on Milton.
CARLYLE'S Heroes and Hero Worship (The Hero as King).
CARLYLE'S Letters and Speeches of Cromwell.
FAIRFAX Correspondence (Reign of Charles I.).
MRS. CHARLES'S Draytons and Davenants.
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STEIN'S Milton und seine Zeit.
SYMONDS'S Sketches and Studies in Southern Europe, Vol. II., pp. 362–382.
ADDISON'S Spectator (Essays on Paradise Lost).
DR. JOHNSON'S Lives (Milton: For an unfavorable view).
INTRODUCTION to Globe Ed. of Milton.
GAIRDNER'S Puritan Revolution. (Epochs of Modern History.)
T. H. GREEN'S Lectures on English Commonwealth, Vol. III.
MAURICE'S The Friendship of Books, Lecture IX.

CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE OF THE LIFE OF MILTON.

1608. Dec. 9, John Milton, son of John and Sarah Milton, is born in Bread Street, Cheapside, London.

1619–1620 (approximate date). Under the tutelage of Thomas Young, a Puritan teacher.

1620 (?)–1624. A pupil at St. Paul's, London.

1625–1632. A student at Christ's College, Cambridge, where he takes respectively the B.A. and M.A. degrees. (During this period we have two notable poems, *On Shakespeare* and *Ode on the Nativity*, with others of less importance.)

1632–1638. Residence with his parents at Horton. (During this period occurs the death of his mother; also all the poems included in this book are written.)

1638–1639. Period of travel on the Continent, chiefly in Italy. (During this period *Italian Sonnets.*)

1639. Milton a school-teacher in London (see *Tractate on Education*).

1641–1642. Earliest controversial pamphlets.

1643. First marriage to Mary Powell.

1644. Divorce pamphlets. Publication of his best piece of prose, *Areopagitica.*

1648–1649. Secretary of Cromwell, the highest office in the new Commonwealth. (Period of several of the sonnets.)

1651. Publication of *The Defence of the English People.*

1654. Milton becomes blind.

1656. Second marriage to Catharine Woodcock.
1657. Retirement from public life.
1660. The Restoration of Charles II. Milton temporarily in hiding.
1663. Third marriage to Elizabeth Minshull.
1665. Residence in Chalfont during the London Plague.
1665. Completion of *Paradise Lost.*
1665–1666. The composition of *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes.*
1667. Publication of *Paradise Lost.*
1671. Publication of *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes.*
1674. Nov. 8, John Milton dies.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

MILTON and the first American book * were born in the same year, 1608. In England, James the First had succeeded Elizabeth, the High Church was in the ascendant, the Puritans in the minority, and talk was rife of emigration to America. The Gunpowder Plot had been recently discovered (1605), the Scotch were settling the northern part of Ireland, and the first colonizations from England were being made in India.

Abroad, the last of the Moors had been driven from Spain, Cervantes had published his "Don Quixote" (1605), Galileo was being persecuted for upholding the Copernican system, Guido was producing his now world-renowned masterpieces, and Rubens was studying in Italy.

The glory of the Elizabethan literature was yet undimmed, for Bacon was still the trusted counsellor of the king, and Shakespeare had not retired to Stratford on Avon; Ben Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, Chapman, Marston, Dekker, were the "applause and wonder" of the stage; and Daniel, Drayton, and Donne, by much weaker work, were demonstrating that there was great opportunity for the powers of a new lyric poet. Like Chaucer, Spenser, Ben Jonson, Pope, Browning, and Ruskin, Milton's eyes looked first on the scenes of the largest city of the world; but at that date it was not the London of

* A True Relation of Virginia by Capt. John Smith.

two millions, but a Boston-sized city of a few hundred thousands. In the very heart of it was Milton's home in Bread Street, not two minutes' walk from Mermaid Tavern, immortalized by the presence of Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Beaumont, and Fletcher, and the song of Keats beginning:—

> "Souls of poets dead and gone,
> What Elysium have ye known,
> Happy field or mossy cavern,
> Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?"

Nor was it more than five minutes to St. Paul's Churchyard, and all the life and bustle of Cheapside.

Milton's parentage is even more interesting than that of Shakespeare, since we can early trace in the epic poet, physical, intellectual, and spiritual traits that must have been a direct inheritance, as is instanced in his love of music, his Puritan predilections, his religious faith, and unfortunately his tendency to weak vision that finally resulted in total blindness.

Milton has consciously or unconsciously drawn his own child-portrait in his description of the childhood of Jesus:—

> "When I was yet a child no childish play
> To me was pleasing; all my mind was set
> Serious to learn and know, and thence to do
> What might be public good; myself I thought
> Born to that end, born to promote all truth,
> All righteous things."
>
> *Paradise Regained*, Book I., 201-206.

Milton's youthful beauty was so distinguished that he was painted when only a child of ten, by the famous artist Jansen, who gives us an ideal picture of the poet-child. Thus, in a household full of Puritan austerities, but softened and refined

by the frequent visits of artistic musical friends who found delight in the madrigal as well as the psalm, Milton grew to early manhood.

In reviewing Milton's life, it looks very much as if Milton gravely resolved to be a great man and achieved it. At eleven he had paraphrased the psalm we still sing in our churches, —

> "Let us with a gladsome mind
> Praise the Lord, for he is kind;"

thus illustrating at the start his religious passion. At this time he was preparing for college at St. Paul's, or was one of "Paul's pigeons," as the popular phrase of the day termed all St. Paul's boys.

At this early age he is mastering Latin, Hebrew, Greek, French, and Italian, and, at a period when it is necessary that a maid should sit up with him, is allowed to stay up till nearly midnight to study.

When, at sixteen years of age, he enters Christ's College, Cambridge, his acquirements are such that, as in Jonathan Edwards' case in our own country, it would have seemed fitting to present him his degree at the outset. He is of so delicate a colouring, and so gentle of deportment, that at college he wins the nickname of "the lady." Wordsworth in his Prelude, in the division entitled "Cambridge," gives us a charming pen-portrait of Milton at college: —

> "Yea, our blind poet who in later day
> Stood almost single, uttering odious truth,
> . . . I seemed to see him here
> Familiarly, and in his scholar's dress
> Bounding before me, yet a stripling youth,
> A boy, no better, with his rosy cheeks
> Angelical, keen eye, courageous look,
> And conscious step of purity and pride."

A description of Milton's life at Cambridge from his own hand, is to be found in Lycidas, lines 23–36 of this edition.

It is in college that Milton's muse first awakens; and from this time we have, among several poems, two that have grown greater with age, the one, doubtless partly for its noble association, an epitaph on Shakespeare, prefixed to the Second Folio of the dramatist; the other, for its masterly power, the famous Ode on the Nativity of Christ. One needs to read but this last-named poem to learn that a breadth of learning and depth of wisdom, joined to a poet's "fine frenzy," was proclaimed in the under-graduate — and that "a star that dwelt apart" had arisen in the poetical firmament of England.

After Milton had taken his degrees, he had what might be well coveted for every thoughtful young graduate, a season of rest for several years, of which he says, —

"At my father's country residence, whither he had retired to pass his age, I, with every advantage of leisure, spent a complete holiday in turning over the Greek and Latin writers; not but that I sometimes exchanged the country for the town, either for the purpose of buying books, or for that of learning something new in mathematics or music, in which sciences I then delighted."

From this happy interlude in a life that was destined to know the stormiest scenes, ere Milton had become too wise in the knowledge of the world and somewhat roughened by its asperities, we have the exquisite lyrics L'Allegro and Il Penseroso, the matchless masque of Comus, and the divine elegy of Lycidas. Given Milton the environment of our late-lamented Tennyson, and we should have had the poet that these sweetest of lyrics introduced to the world, but we should have forever failed a great English Epic.

In 1638 Milton says, "Having passed five years in this manner, after my mother's death I, being desirous of seeing for-

eign lands, and especially Italy, went abroad with one servant, having by entreaty obtained my father's consent."

He travelled in elegant leisure with distinguished letters of introduction that opened to him the doors of poets and artists. Most of his time was passed in Italy, while a proposed three years' absence was shortened to less than two, because, as he said, "I deemed it dishonourable to be enjoying myself at my ease in foreign lands while my countrymen were striking a blow for freedom."

This freedom was from the tyranny of the Stuart dynasty, whose doctrine of the "divine right of kings" was to Milton by nature and education the most obnoxious of teachings.

At the end of his journey Milton writes in his journal, "I again take God to witness that in all those places where so many things are considered lawful, I lived sound and untouched from all profligacy, and having this thought perpetually with me, that, though I might escape the eyes of men, I certainly could not the eyes of God."

This recalls Wordsworth's lines with reference to himself when he left college: —

> "By personal ambition unenslaved,
> Frugal as there was need, and tho' self-willed,
> From dangerous passion free."

The historical chapter that follows is familiar to all, the temporary fall of the Stuarts, the execution of King Charles the First, the rise of the Cromwellian party, the defeat of Archbishop Laud, the short-lived period of the Commonwealth (1649–1660), and the Restoration of the Stuarts in the return of Charles the Second in 1660.

Milton was not hasty in allying himself with the Cromwellians, but for several years lived in London, first as a schoolteacher though not a successful one, then as a pamphlet-writer,

until in 1648 we find him the Latin Secretary of Cromwell, and "foremost of the fore" in pushing the schemes for making England the Monarchy, England the Republican Commonwealth. The poet's lyre is forgotten save now and then the "strains, alas, too few" whose echo lingers in the sonnets that were pressed into the service of the state during this period. The "left hand" which he had for prose is never idle, and pamphlet follows pamphlet in the interests of national and ecclesiastical freedom.

Freedom in social life is illustrated by his pamphlets on Divorce, in religious life by his pamphlets on Ecclesiastical Liberty, in national life by his defence of the execution of the king that made him the most talked-of man in all Europe. Caught as in a maelstrom, he gives a sigh for "days that are no more" in these words: "I may one day hope to have ye again [his studies] in a still time when there shall be no chidings; not in these noises."

With the Restoration came quiet enough for Milton. To save his life, his friends kept him at first in close hiding; but with the general pardon and amnesty proclaimed by Charles the Second he again ventured into the world, a world now for him a world of darkness, for with the strain of the Cromwellian days had resulted entire loss of sight. In obscure places at Holborn, Aldersgate, Bunhill Fields, Chalfont, he lived the remainder of his days, while the gay court of the Merry Monarch forgot the most kingly soul in all the realm.

He had three times married, with varying fortunes in domestic life. His first wife, Mary Powell, was the mother of his three daughters; it is to his second wife, Catharine Woodcock, the sonnet To my Deceased Wife is addressed; his last wife, Elizabeth Minshull, survived him.

Wedded to books, to immortal verse, to affairs of state, it is questioned whether any of the three found in Milton even

the dominating but "gracious consort" depicted in the Paradise Lost. There are certainly passages in Milton's life that are not admirable. The Milton who had no patience with his young and probably thoughtless wife, emphasizing by his divorce pamphlets what he should have concealed during her brief absence from him, the Milton who heaps opprobrious epithets on his enemies, the Milton who neither understood nor seemed to care to understand his daughters, mentioning them in his will as undutiful and unkind, this is the Milton one would take less pains to cultivate.

Fallen on evil days, he revived an ambition of his youth to write "a work not to be raised from the heat of youth or the vapours of wine, not to be obtained of dame Memory and her siren daughters, but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit that can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and send out His Seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases. To this must be added industrious and select reading, steady observation, and insight into all seemly arts and affairs."

Such a work, the "epic of a lost cause," appeared in Paradise Lost, a poem that the public, as Milton craved, would not "willingly let die," although the partisan spirit of the times, and the ill repute of the author in the eyes of the court, gave it scant recognition till years after his death.

It is said that Dr. Johnson's verdict against Milton kept at least two generations from reading the best poet of the age, although in all times he has had "fit audience though few." Of the Restoration he demanded far too much learning and sound scholarship to find popularity, though until after the glorious Revolution, when the liberal party took him up, no poet who had defended regicide had the smallest chance for fame. But it was renown that Milton coveted, and for that a great soul can wait beyond a lifetime. So bitter was the spirit

against him, that it was as late as 1737 before his bust found admission to Westminster Abbey, where a generation before the Dean had refused admittance to an inscription for John Phillips's monument because, forsooth, it contained a reference to Milton.

Whatever may be thought of Paradise Lost as a justification of the ways of God with men, as a specimen of the purest blank verse, and as a study of national life in the latter part of the seventeenth century, the poem is invaluable.

Paradise Regained shortly followed, and Samson Agonistes. These were Milton's latest productions. He died Nov. 8, 1674, nearly sixty-seven years of age, having lived in three of the most significant periods of English History. This is, undoubtedly, the reason that we may study three Miltons, — the first, the Milton before the Civil War, an Elizabethan lyric poet, and a man whose perfection of culture represents the culture not only of England but of Europe. This is the Milton of the following pages; the Milton of the Civil War, the statesman and great prose-writer so learned in the languages that one facetiously remarked of him that a second confusion of tongues would not disturb Milton, since he would understand them all; Milton the old blind poet of the days of the Restoration, who gave England her noble Epic.

Says that prince of sound critics, Landor, "It may be doubted whether the Creator ever created one altogether so great as Milton, taking into view at once his manly virtues, his superhuman genius, his zeal for truth, for true piety, true freedom, his eloquence in displaying it, his contempt of personal power, his glory and exultation in his country's."

"My mind," says Coleridge, "is not capable of forming a more august conception than arises from the contemplation of this great man in his later days. Poor, sick, blind, slandered, persecuted in an age in which he was as little understood by

the party for whom as by that against whom he had contended, and among men before whom he strode so far as to dwarf himself by the distance, yet still listening to the music of his own thoughts, or if additionally cheered, yet cheered only by the prophetic faith of two or three solitary individuals, he did nevertheless

> "Argue not
> Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
> Of heart or hope; but still bore up and steered
> Right onward."

LITERARY CHARACTERISTICS.

STYLE.

"Three poets in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn;
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed,
The next in majesty, in both the last.
The force of Nature could no further go:
To make a third, she joined the other two."

— *Dryden.*

In an age, branded to-day for its lack of appreciation of Shakespeare and Milton, there was one man the nearest a great poet of them all who saw that the reputation of these two did not lie in the interpretation of the Restoration Period. Of Milton, Dryden said, "This man cuts us all out and the ancients too." In the familiar couplets quoted are indicated the chief qualities of Milton's style. To sublimity and majesty may be added sweetness and strength with a purity of diction unattained by any other English poet up to his time.

VOCABULARY.

The vocabulary of Milton is second in copiousness to that of Shakespeare with this difference. The universal interest in humanity of the dramatic poet gave him a universal vocabulary. Milton's academic culture not only causes him to use many Latinized words, but represses his spirit and makes him

sift his words, electing only those that are most choice. He is said to have used about eight thousand words. Shakespeare uses fifteen thousand. In Shakespeare sixty per cent are Anglo-Saxon, in Milton less than thirty-three; the earlier poems yield a much higher rate of native words than those that were written after the Civil War. This is easily accounted for when we recall that his Secretaryship was a *Latin* Secretaryship.

VERSIFICATION.

Milton's versification is "musical as bright Apollo's lute." It was not without the most remunerative results in his poetical work that he had listened in his childhood and youth to the best music, and in later years made it "a refreshment to laborious days." So well trained is his ear, that he affirmed that the lawlessness of Shakespeare's blank verse placed it out of the conditions necessary for its creation; hence, to his judgment it was not properly blank verse. His perfect rhythm and rhyme make him one of the most harmonious poets for reading aloud; yet his verse is not despotic as in Swinburne, and the sense and sound, like a flowing and ebbing wave, rise and fall together. This may be well seen in some of his sonnets, the form in this case offering the best opportunity for the wave effect.

For the most part Milton's verse is iambic, the prevailing measure of English verse.

L'ALLEGRO AND IL PENSEROSO.

THE composition of L'Allegro and Il Penseroso may be assigned to the early years of the residence at Horton, probably about 1632 or 1633. That he had not yet become master of the Italian in which he afterwards freely wrote, is evidenced by the faulty construction of the word Penseroso, which the Italians disclaim as an Italian word.

The versification is mainly in octosyllabic iambics, with occasionally a trochaic initial verse. Each poem opens with a lyric whose metre is varied. The perfect majestic sustained rhythm of Paradise Lost was a study of later years.

The general treatment of his theme is not original with Milton. For poems akin to L'Allegro and Il Penseroso, it is worth the pains to read Marlowe's Passionate Shepherd, Raleigh's Nymph's Reply, and other contemporary lyrics. The two poems are perfect Elizabethan in naturalness, vigour, and spontaneity, but Puritan in moral tone.

These odes should be read together, as they were doubtless written as companion pieces, and, as a study of parallels of thought, are unexampled in English poetry. L'Allegro is a view of nature, man, art, and books, as these appear to the man of culture when he is filled with the spirit of appreciative joy. Il Penseroso is the same view when the observer is

in a mood of contemplative sadness. In the one poem Milton invites Mirth to be the companion of his day, and from the joyous dawn carolled in by the lark takes us through a rustic day to a social evening around the hearth, with the later hours given to the poets and music.

Il Penseroso invites Melancholy to be her "guide, philosopher, and friend," and under "the wandering moon" listens to the nightingale in solitary, musing Sleep, induced "in arched walks of twilight groves," a slumber dispelled by religious music in organ-tones, until the mind can conceive no higher satisfaction in life than "the hairy gown and mossy cell" of the hermit.

While the atmosphere of L'Allegro is distinctly social, and that of Il Penseroso as distinctly solitary, it is to be noted that both poems find the climax of enjoyment in solitariness.

Possibly it is for this reason that Il Penseroso is popularly supposed to be the preferred mood of the poet, for undoubtedly the poems are somewhat autobiographic. When one reads the epitaph on Hobson, the carrier, and studies carefully the poet's earlier life, he is forced, however, to the conclusion that Milton was also capable of the gayer disposition until the Civil War and its stern events fixed a mind often disposed to cavalier rhymes and light-hearted impressions, in utter seriousness.

It is a pity that many of Milton's critics have attempted to destroy the pure poetic art of these master-pieces by assuming that the ideal scenery portrayed can be identified with Horton, Oxford, or Windsor. Like the Forest of Arden, the grove in Midsummer Night's Dream, the enchanted island of the Tempest, the landscape pictures of L'Allegro and Il Penseroso existed only in the imagination of the poet, where gorgeous towers and cloud-capped palaces might be created

at will. It is a country, too, not seen by the rustic, but by the scholarly, artistic, university-trained Milton.

A good comparative analysis of these two poems may be found in Bell's Edition, "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," page 48.

These two poems may well be named, Poems of Milton's period of hope. The great Civil War destroyed the beautiful Elizabethan style as it also ruined much fine architecture, and Milton's earliest style went with it.

FAMOUS MASQUES (FOR COMPARISON).

PEELE'S Arraignment of Paris, 1584.
BEN JONSON'S Masque of Oberon, 1611.
CHAPMAN'S Memorable Masque, 1613.
DANIEL'S Hymen's Triumph, 1613.
SHIRLEY'S Triumph of Peace, 1634.
MILTON'S Comus, 1634.

COMUS.

In no Miltonic poem do we find the illustration of Milton's musical and poetic talent combined as in Comus. Comus is a masque. The masque is something between a pageant and a play; it combines recitative, lyric poetry, and songs with music and dancing, the latter and lighter portions of the entertainment to be shared by the guests.

The English masque was an Italian importation. In Italy the climate and outdoor scenery favored extravagant pageant and procession; in England an uncertain sky made it necessary that the larger portion of the entertainment should be under cover; hence there resulted less of the work of the mechanic, the scene-painter, and the milliner, and more of the actor, the musician, and the poet. Thus the English raised the masque to the dignity of literature, and, in the imperfection of English music, gave it substantial value as poetry.

Despite this fact, the success of the masque depended largely on the magnificence of the spectacle produced; and the rival merits of Inigo Jones, the great architect of masques, and Ben Jonson, their most popular poet, ended at last in an estrangement between the two artists.

Throughout the reign of James the First, masques were the favorite form of private theatricals, and were especially in

vogue for ceremonious occasions, as a marriage, a birthday, a royal visit, or a noble reception. One of the most vivid descriptions of the masque may be found in Scott's Kenilworth, where the novelist describes the masque presented on the occasion of Elizabeth's royal visit to Leicester.

The occasion of Milton's masque was to celebrate the inauguration of John Egerton, Earl of Bridgewater, as Lord President of Wales, when he took possession of Ludlow Castle, a seat full of historical interest for its association with Edward Fifth, who was proclaimed king here. In later time it has a literary interest as the place where Samuel Butler wrote a part of his Hudibras; but it surely has had no greater glory conferred on it than that it was the scene of Milton's Comus. Though written in the decline of the masque, for delicacy of theme, ingenuity of plot, and beauty of expression, this masque outrivals the best of Ben Jonson. It was accompanied by music written for the occasion by Milton's friend, Henry Lawes, no mean musician in the Earl's household.

A first reading for the outline of the story will reveal the multiplied opportunity offered by the plot for delightful effects in scenery and surprises in presentation. As an idyllic pastoral masque, it is without a peer.

As the children of the earl were to take the principal parts, and the earl's daughter to play the *rôle* of Lady Alice, this apotheosis of Virtue was a singularly delicate and fitting compliment to the character of the family whose incoming the lyrical drama celebrated. The story is told with Doric simplicity and Attic grace, and draped as severely as a vestal virgin.

As an illustration of the mastery of the righteous will over appetite and passion, it forms an excellent contrast to the story of Faust, and is often considered a first study for Milton's Satan, as well as the key-note to his revolutionary sympathies.

LYCIDAS.

"The elegiac poet is a nightingale sitting in darkness cheering his own solitude with sweet sounds." — SHELLEY.

THE word "elegy" has come to be applied to any serious poetry tinged with sadness and reflecting the transitory character of life. In Milton's time the meaning was less widely diffused, and in the case of Lycidas, we have a distinct, objective lament for the loss of Edward King, a young college friend, who was drowned in making the passage from Chester to Dublin across the treacherous Irish Sea. Lycidas was the last poem written by Milton before starting on his foreign travels. Its earliest publication was in a collection of poems prepared as a tribute of respect to their dead comrade by his fellow-students; and Milton's contribution, the last in the volume, proved to be the first of value, and indeed the only one whose fame has survived time.

Lycidas is a pastoral elegy after the manner of Theocritus and Bion. Shelley's elegy on Keats is an imitation of the same masters, and the two can be profitably compared; e.g., Shelley also, in allegorical figure, represents himself as a shepherd, lamenting the death of a brother shepherd, and follows Milton in denying death. Milton says,—

"Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more;
For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead."

Shelley says, in his Adonais, —

"Peace, peace, he is not dead, he doth not sleep!
He hath awakened from the dream of life."

Both view nature as shadowed by this bereavement. Milton says, —

"But, O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone and never must return;
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes mourn."

Shelley repeats, —

"Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless mountains
And feeds her grief with his remembered lay."

Milton the staunch Puritan, and Shelley the atheist, falsely so-called, take alike a pantheistic view.
Milton says, —

"Now Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good,
To all that wander in that perilous flood."

Shelley, —

"He is made one with Nature. There is heard,
His voice in all her music."

The happy use of figures, flowers, music, in this poem may be made a compensating study. In the latter comparison,

Arnold's Thyrsis, and William Watson's "Lachrymæ Musarum," will be found full of imitative passages. Nor will a wise teacher omit the words replete with prophecy found in the famous diatribe included between lines 108–131, a digression surely, but a passage full of power, the more significant when compared with those sweeter lines that are like the wind sweeping across the strings of an Æolian harp.

The versification of Lycidas is Italian in form, the lines having five and three accents, recurring at irregular intervals. Warton says, "He who wishes to know whether he has a true taste for poetry or not should consider whether he is highly delighted or not with the perusal of Milton's Lycidas."

L'ALLEGRO.

HENCE, loathed Melancholy,
  Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born
In Stygian cave forlorn
  'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!
Find out some uncouth cell,
  Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night raven sings;
  There, under ebon shades and low-browed rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
  In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
But come, thou Goddess fair and free,
In heaven yclept Euphrosyne,
And by men heart-easing Mirth;
Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
With two sister Graces more,
To ivy-crownèd Bacchus bore:
Or whether (as some sager sing)
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying,
There, on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses washed in dew,

Filled her with thee, a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful Jollity,
Quips and Cranks and wanton Wiles,
Nods and Becks and wreathèd Smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it, as you go,
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty;
And if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreprovèd pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And, singing, startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow,
Through the sweetbriar or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine;
While the cock, with lively din,
Scatters the rear of darkness thin;
And to the stack, or the barn door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:

Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Some time walking, not unseen,
By hedgerow elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate
Where the great Sun begins his state,
Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landscape round it measures:
Russet lawns, and fallows grey,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim, with daisies pied;
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide;
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The cynosure of neighbouring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes
From betwixt two aged oaks,

Where Corydon and Thyrsis met
Are at their savoury dinner set
Of herbs and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tanned haycock in the mead.
Sometimes, with secure delight,
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth and many a maid
Dancing in the chequered shade,
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holiday,
Till the livelong daylight fail:
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How Faery Mab the junkets eat.
She was pinched, and pulled, she said,
And he, by Friar's lantern led,
Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn
That ten day-labourers could not end;
Then lies him down, the lubber fiend,
And, stretched out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength,

Ere the first cock his matin rings,
And crop-full out of doors he flings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.
  Towered cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit or arms, while both contend
To win her grace whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask, and antique pageantry;
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learnèd sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.
  And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes with many a winding bout
Of linkèd sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,

Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto to have quite set free
His half-regained Eurydice.
These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

IL PENSEROSO.

Hence, vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred!
How little you bested,
Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sun-beams,
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
But hail! thou Goddess sage and holy!
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starred Ethiop queen that strove
To set her beauty's praise above

The Sea-Nymphs, and their powers offended.
Yet thou art higher far descended:
Thee bright-haired Vesta long of yore
To solitary Saturn bore;
His daughter she; in Saturn's reign
Such mixture was not held a stain.
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
While yet there was no fear of Jove.
  Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train,
A sable stole of cypress lawn,
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come; but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast
And join with thee calm Peace and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing;
And add to these retired Leisure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure;

But, first and chiefest, with thee bring
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheelèd throne,
The cherub Contemplation;
And the mute Silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest, saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke
Gently o'er the accustomed oak.
Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, chauntress, oft the woods among
I woo, to hear thy even-song;
And, missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heaven's wide pathless way,
And oft, as if her head she bowed,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud,
Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-watered shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar;
Or, if the air will not permit,
Some still removèd place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom

Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's drowsy charm
To bless the doors from nightly harm.
Or let my lamp, at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind, that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook;
And of those demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
In sceptred pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine,
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath the buskined stage.
But, O sad Virgin! that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower;
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what love did seek;
Or call up him that left half-told
The story of Cambuscan bold,

Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That owned the virtuous ring and glass,
And of the wondrous horse of brass
On which the Tartar king did ride;
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of turneys, and of trophies hung,
Of forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited Morn appear,
Not tricked and frounced, as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kerchieft in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or ushered with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves,
With minute-drops from off the eaves.
And, when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring
To archèd walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe with heavèd stroke
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
There, in close covert, by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,

Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honied thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feathered Sleep.
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings, in airy stream
Of lively portraiture displayed,
Softly on my eyelids laid;
And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
Or the unseen Genius of the wood.
But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloister's pale,
And love the high embowèd roof,
With antique pillars massy-proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voiced quire below,
In service high, and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ectasies,
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell

Of every star that heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew,
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
These pleasures, Melancholy, give;
And I with thee will choose to live.

COMUS.

A MASQUE.

Presented at Ludlow Castle, in 1634, before John, Earl of Bridgewater, then President of Wales.

THE PERSONS.

The Attendant Spirit, afterwards in the habit of Thyrsis.
Comus, with his Crew.
The Lady.
First Brother.
Second Brother.
Sabrina, the Nymph.

THE CHIEF PERSONS WHICH PRESENTED WERE—

The Lord Brackley. | Mr. Thos. Egerton, his brother.
The Lady Alice Egerton.

The first Scene discovers a wild wood.

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT *descends or enters.*

BEFORE the starry threshold of Jove's court
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright aerial spirits live insphered
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot
Which men call Earth, and, with low-thoughted care,
Confined and pestered in this pinfold here,
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindful of the crown that Virtue gives,
After this mortal change, to her true servants

Amongst the enthronèd gods on sainted seats.
Yet some there be that by due steps aspire
To lay their just hands on that golden key
That opes the palace of eternity.
To such my errand is; and, but for such,
I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds
With the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould.
But to my task. Neptune, besides the sway
Of every salt flood and each ebbing stream,
Took in, by lot 'twixt high and nether Jove,
Imperial rule of all the sea-girt isles
That, like to rich and various gems, inlay
The unadornèd bosom of the deep;
Which he, to grace his tributary gods,
By course commits to several government,
And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns,
And wield their little tridents. But this Isle,
The greatest and the best of all the main,
He quarters to his blue-haired deities;
And all this tract that fronts the falling sun
A noble Peer of mickle trust and power
Has in his charge, with tempered awe to guide
An old and haughty nation, proud in arms:
Where his fair offspring, nursed in princely lore,
Are coming to attend their father's state,
And new-entrusted sceptre. But their way
Lies through the perplexed paths of this drear wood,
The nodding horror of whose shady brows
Threats the forlorn and wandering passenger;
And here their tender age might suffer peril,

But that, by quick command from sovran Jove,
I was dispatched for their defence and guard:
And listen why, for I will tell you now
What never yet was heard in tale or song,
From old or modern bard, in hall or bower.
Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
Crushed the sweet poison of misusèd wine,
After the Tuscan mariners transformed,
Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,
On Circe's island fell. (Who knows not Circe,
The daughter of the Sun, whose charmèd cup
Whoever tasted lost his upright shape,
And downward fell into a grovelling swine?)
This Nymph that gazed upon his clustering locks,
With ivy berries wreathed, and his blithe youth,
Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son
Much like his father, but his mother more,
Whom therefore she brought up, and Comus named:
Who, ripe and frolic of his full-grown age,
Roving the Celtic and Iberian fields,
At last betakes him to this ominous wood,
And, in thick shelter of black shades imbowered,
Excels his mother at her mighty art;
Offering to every weary traveller
His orient liquor in a crystal glass,
To quench the drouth of Phœbus; which as they taste
(For most do taste through fond intemperate thirst),
Soon as the potion works, their human count'nance,
The express resemblance of the gods, is changed
Into some brutish form of wolf or bear,

Or ounce or tiger, hog, or bearded goat,
All other parts remaining as they were.
And they, so perfect is their misery,
Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
But boast themselves more comely than before,
And all their friends and native home forget,
To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty.
Therefore, when any favoured of high Jove
Chances to pass through this adventurous glade,
Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star
I shoot from heaven, to give him safe convoy,
As now I do. But first I must put off
These my sky robes, spun out of Iris' woof,
And take the weeds and likeness of a swain
That to the service of this house belongs,
Who, with his soft pipe and smooth-dittied song,
Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
And hush the waving woods; nor of less faith,
And in this office of his mountain watch
Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid
Of this occasion. But I hear the tread
Of hateful steps; I must be viewless now.

COMUS *enters, with a charming-rod in one hand, his glass in the other; with him a rout of monsters, headed like sundry sorts of wild beasts, but otherwise like men and women, their apparel glistering. They come in making a riotous and unruly noise, with torches in their hands.*

COMUS. The star that bids the shepherd fold
Now the top of heaven doth hold;

And the gilded car of day
His glowing axle doth allay
In the steep Atlantic stream;
And the slope sun his upward beam
Shoots against the dusky pole,
Pacing toward the other goal
Of his chamber in the east.
Meanwhile, welcome joy and feast,
Midnight shout and revelry,
Tipsy dance and jollity.
Braid your locks with rosy twine,
Dropping odours, dropping wine.
Rigour now is gone to bed;
And Advice with scrupulous head,
Strict Age, and sour Severity,
With their grave saws, in slumber lie.
We, that are of purer fire,
Imitate the starry quire,
Who in their nightly watchful spheres,
Lead in swift round the months and years.
The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,
Now to the moon in wavering morrice move;
And on the tawny sands and shelves
Trip the pert fairies and the dapper elves.
By dimpled brook and fountain-brim,
The wood-nymphs, decked with daisies trim,
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep:
What hath night to do with sleep?
Night hath better sweets to prove;
Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.

Come, let us our rites begin;
'Tis only daylight that makes sin,
Which these dun shades will ne'er report.
Hail, goddess of nocturnal sport,
Dark-veiled Cotytto, to whom the secret flame
Of midnight torches burns! mysterious dame,
That ne'er art called but when the dragon womb
Of Stygian darkness spets her thickest gloom,
And makes one blot of all the air!
Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
Wherein thou ridest with Hecat', and befriend
Us thy vowed priests, till utmost end
Of all thy dues be done, and none left out;
Ere the blabbing eastern scout,
The nice Morn on the Indian steep,
From her cabined loop-hole peep,
And to the tell-tale Sun descry
Our concealed solemnity.
Come, knit hands, and beat the ground
In a light fantastic round.

The Measure.

Break off, break off! I feel the different pace
Of some chaste footing near about this ground.
Run to your shrouds within these brakes and trees;
Our number may affright. Some virgin sure
(For so I can distinguish by mine art)
Benighted in these woods! Now to my charms,
And to my wily traine: I shall ere long
Be well stocked with as fair a herd as grazed

About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl
My dazzling spells into the spongy air,
Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
And give it false presentments, lest the place
And my quaint habits breed astonishment,
And put the damsel to suspicious flight;
Which must not be, for that's against my course.
I, under fair pretence of friendly ends,
And well-placed words of glozing courtesy,
Baited with reasons not unplausible,
Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
And hug him into snares. When once her eye
Hath met the virtue of this magic dust,
I shall appear some harmless villager,
Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
But here she comes; I fairly step aside,
And hearken, if I may her business hear.

The Lady enters.

LADY. This way the noise was, if mine ear be true,
My best guide now. Methought it was the sound
Of riot and ill-managed merriment,
Such as the jocund flute or gamesome pipe
Stirs up among the loose unlettered hinds,
When, for their teeming flocks, and granges full,
In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,
And thank the gods amiss. I should be loth
To meet the rudeness and swilled insolence
Of such late wassailers; yet, oh! where else
Shall I inform my unacquainted feet

In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?
My brothers, when they saw me wearied out
With this long way, resolving here to lodge
Under the spreading favour of these pines,
Stepped, as they said, to the next thicket-side,
To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit
As the kind hospitable woods provide.
They left me then when the grey-hooded Even,
Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain.
But where they are, and why they came not back,
Is now the labour of my thoughts. 'Tis likeliest
They had engaged their wandering steps too far;
And envious darkness, ere they could return,
Had stole them from me. Else, O thievish Night,
Why shouldst thou, but for some felonious end,
In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars
That Nature hung in heaven, and filled their lamps
With everlasting oil, to give due light
To the misled and lonely traveller?
This is the place, as well as I may guess,
Whence even now the tumult of loud mirth
Was rife, and perfect in my listening ear;
Yet nought but single darkness do I find.
What might this be? A thousand fantasies
Begin to throng into my memory,
Of calling shapes, and beckoning shadows dire,
And airy tongues that syllable men's names
On sands and shores and desert wildernesses.
These thoughts may startle well, but not astound

The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
By a strong siding champion, Conscience.
O welcome, pure-eyed Faith, white-handed Hope,
Thou hovering angel girt with golden wings,
And thou unblemished form of Chastity!
I see ye visibly, and now believe
That He, the Supreme Good, to whom all things ill
Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
Would send a glistering guardian, if need were,
To keep my life and honour unassailed. . . .
Was I deceived, or did a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night?
I did not err: there does a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night,
And casts a gleam over this tufted grove.
I cannot hallo to my brothers, but
Such noise as I can make to be heard farthest
I'll venture; for my new-enlivened spirits
Prompt me, and they perhaps are not far off.

SONG.

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen
Within thy airy shell
By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-embroidered vale
Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well:
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That likest thy Narcissus are?

O, if thou have
Hid them in some flowery cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet Queen of Parley, daughter of the sphere!
So mayst thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all Heaven's harmonies!

Enter Comus.

COMUS. Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
And with these raptures moves the vocal air
To testify his hidden residence.
How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,
At every fall smoothing the raven down
Of darkness till it smiled! I have oft heard
My mother Circe with the Sirens three,
Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades,
Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs,
Who, as they sung, would take the prisoned soul,
And lap it in Elysium: Scylla wept,
And chid her barking waves into attention,
And fell Charybdis murmured soft applause.
Yet they in pleasing slumber lulled the sense,
And in sweet madness robbed it of itself;
But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
I never heard till now. I'll speak to her,
And she shall be my queen. — Hail, foreign wonder!

Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,
Unless the goddess that in rural shrine
Dwell'st here with Pan or Sylvan, by blest song
Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog
To touch the prosperous growth of this tall wood.
LADY. Nay, gentle shepherd, ill is lost that praise
That is addressed to unattending ears.
Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
How to regain my severed company,
Compelled me to awake the courteous Echo
To give me answer from her mossy couch.
COM. What chance, good lady, hath bereft you thus?
LADY. Dim darkness and this leafy labyrinth.
COM. Could that divide you from near-ushering guides?
LADY. They left me weary on a grassy turf.
COMUS. By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why?
LADY. To seek i' the valley some cool friendly spring.
COMUS. And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady?
LADY. They were but twain, and purposed quick return.
COMUS. Perhaps forestalling night prevented them.
LADY. How easy my misfortune is to hit!
COMUS. Imports their loss, beside the present need?
LADY. No less than if I should my brothers lose.
COMUS. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?
LADY. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazored lips.
COMUS. Two such I saw, what time the laboured ox
In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the swinked hedger at his supper sat.
I saw them under a green mantling vine,
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,

Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots;
Their port was more than human, as they stood.
I took it for a fairy vision
Of some gay creatures of the element,
That in the colours of the rainbow live,
And play i' the plighted clouds. I was awe-strook,
And as I passed, I worshiped. If those you seek,
It were a journey like the path to Heaven,
To help you find them.

LADY. Gentle villager,
What readiest way would bring me to that place?

COMUS. Due west it rises from this shrubby point.

LADY. To find that out, good shepherd, I suppose,
In such a scant allowance of star-light,
Would overtask the best land-pilot's art,
Without the sure guess of well-practised feet.

COMUS. I know each lane, and every alley green,
Dingle, or bushy dell of this wild wood,
And every bosky bourn from side to side,
My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood;
And, if your stray attendance be yet lodged
Or shroud within these limits, I shall know
Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark
From her thatched pallet rouse. If otherwise
I can conduct you, lady, to a low
But loyal cottage, where you may be safe
Till further quest.

LADY. Shepherd, I take thy word,
And trust thy honest-offered courtesy,
Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds,

With smoky rafters, than in tapestry halls
And courts of princes, where it first was named,
And yet is most pretended. In a place
Less warranted than this, or less secure,
I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.
Eye me, blest Providence, and square my trial
To my proportioned strength! Shepherd, lead on.

The Two Brothers.

ELDER BROTHER. Unmuffle, ye faint stars; and thou,
That wont'st to love the traveller's benison, [fair moon,
Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
In double night of darkness and of shades;
Or, if your influence be quite dammed up
With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,
Though a rush candle from the wicker-hole
Of some clay habitation, visit us
With thy long levelled rule of streaming light,
And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
Or Tyrian Cynosure.

SECOND BROTHER. Or, if our eyes
Be barred that happiness, might we but hear
The folded flocks, penned in their wattled cotes,
Or sound of pastoral reed with oaten stops,
Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock
Count the night-watches to his feathery dames,
'T would be some solace yet, some little cheering,
In this close dungeon of innumerous boughs.
But, oh, that hapless virgin, our lost sister!

Where may she wander now, whither betake her
From the chill dew, among rude burs and thistles?
Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm
Leans her unpillowed head, fraught with sad fears.
What if in wild amazement, and affright,
Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp
Of savage hunger, or of savage heat!

ELDER BROTHER. Peace, brother; be not over-exquisite
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils;
For, grant they be so, while they rest unknown,
What need a man forestall his date of grief,
And run to meet what he would most avoid?
Or, if they be but false alarms of fear,
How bitter is such self-delusion!
I do not think my sister so to seek,
Or so unprincipled in virtue's book,
And the sweet peace that goodness bosoms ever,
As that the single want of light and noise
(Not being in danger, as I trust she is not)
Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,
And put them into misbecoming plight.
Virtue could see to do what Virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk. And Wisdom's self
Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude,
Where, with her best nurse, Contemplation,
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort,
Were all to-ruffled, and sometimes impaired.

He that has light within his own clear breast
May sit i' the centre, and enjoy bright day:
But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts
Benighted walks under the midday sun;
Himself is his own dungeon.

SECOND BROTHER. 'T is most true
That musing Meditation most affects
The pensive secrecy of desert cell,
Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds,
And sits as safe as in a senate-house;
For who would rob a hermit of his weeds,
His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,
Or do his gray hairs any violence?
But Beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree
Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
Of dragon watch with unenchanted eye
To save her blossoms, and defend her fruit,
From the rash hand of bold Incontinence.
You may as well spread out the unsunned heaps
Of miser's treasure by an outlaw's den,
And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope
Danger will wink on Opportunity,
And let a single helpless maiden pass
Uninjured in this wild surrounding waste.
Of night or loneliness it recks me not;
I fear the dread events that dog them both,
Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the person
Of our unowned sister.

ELDER BROTHER. I do not, brother,
Infer as if I thought my sister's state

Secure without all doubt or controversy;
Yet, where an equal poise of hope and fear
Does arbitrate the event, my nature is
That I incline to hope rather than fear,
And gladly banish squint suspicion.
My sister is not so defenceless left,
As you imagine; she has a hidden strength,
Which you remember not.

SECOND BROTHER. What hidden strength,
Unless the strength of Heaven, if you mean that?

ELDER BROTHER. I mean that too, but yet a hidden [strength,
Which, if Heaven gave it, may be termed her own.
'T is chastity, my brother, chastity:
She that has that is clad in complete steel,
And, like a quivered nymph with arrows keen,
May trace huge forests, and unharboured heaths,
Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds;
Where, through the sacred rays of chastity,
No savage fierce, bandite, or mountaineer,
Will dare to soil her virgin purity.
Yea, there where very desolation dwells,
By grots and caverns shagged with horrid shades,
She may pass on with unblenched majesty,
Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.
Some say no evil thing that walks by night,
In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
Blue meagre hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost,
That breaks his magic chains at curfew time,
No goblin or swart faery of the mine,

Hath hurtful power o'er true virginity.
Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call
Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
To testify the arms of chastity?
Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,
Fair silver-shafted queen for ever chaste,
Wherewith she tamed the brinded lioness
And spotted mountain pard, but set at nought
The frivolous bolt of Cupid; gods and men
Feared her stern frown, and she was queen o' the woods.
What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield
That wise Minerva wore, unconquered virgin,
Wherewith she freezed her foes to congealed stone,
But rigid looks of chaste austerity,
And noble grace that dashed brute violence
With sudden adoration and blank awe?
So dear to Heaven is saintly chastity,
That when a soul is found sincerely so,
A thousand liveried angels lackey her,
Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt,
And in clear dream, and solemn vision
Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear;
Till oft converse with heavenly habitants
Begins to cast a beam on the outward shape,
The unpolluted temple of the mind,
And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,
Till all be made immortal. But, when lust,
By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
Lets in defilement to the inward parts,

The soul grows clotted by contagion,
Imbodies and imbrutes, till she quite lose
The divine property of her first being.
Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp
Oft seen in charnel vaults and sepulchres,
Lingering, and sitting by a new-made grave,
As loth to leave the body that it loved,
And linked itself by carnal sensualty
To a degenerate and degraded state.

SECOND BROTHER. How charming is divine philosophy!
Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns.

ELDER BROTHER. List! list! I hear
Some far-off hallo break the silent air.

SECOND BROTHER. Methought so too; what should it [be?

ELDER BROTHER. For certain,
Either some one, like us, night-foundered here,
Or else some neighbour woodman, or, at worst,
Some roving robber calling to his fellows. [and near!

SECOND BROTHER. Heaven keep my sister. Again, again,
Best draw, and stand upon our guard.

ELDER BROTHER. I 'll hallo,
If he be friendly, he comes well: if not,
Defence is a good cause, and Heaven be for us!

The Attendant Spirit, habited like a shepherd.

That hallo I should know. What are you? speak.
Come not too near; you fall on iron stakes else.

SPIRIT. What voice is that? my young Lord? speak
[again.
SECOND BROTHER. O brother, 't is my father's Shep-
[herd, sure.
ELDER BROTHER. Thyrsis! whose artful strains have
[oft delayed
The huddling brook to hear his madrigal,
And sweetened every musk-rose of the dale.
How camest thou here, good swain? Hath any ram
Slipped from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,
Or straggling wether the pent flock forsook?
How couldst thou find this dark sequestered nook?
SPIRIT. O my loved master's heir, and his next joy,
I came not here on such a trivial toy
As a strayed ewe, or to pursue the stealth
Of pilfering wolf; not all the fleecy wealth
That doth enrich these downs is worth a thought
To this my errand, and the care it brought.
But, oh! my virgin Lady, where is she?
How chance she is not in your company?
ELDER BROTHER. To tell thee sadly, Shepherd, with-
Or our neglect, we lost her as we came. [out blame
SPIRIT. Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true.
ELDER BROTHER. What fears, good Thyrsis? Prythee
[briefly shew.
SPIRIT. I'll tell ye. 'T is not vain or fabulous
(Though so esteemed by shallow ignorance)
What the sage poets, taught by the heavenly Muse,
Storied of old in high immortal verse
Of dire Chimeras and enchanted isles,

And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to Hell;
For such there be, but unbelief is blind.
Within the navel of this hideous wood,
Immured in cypress shades, a sorcerer dwells,
Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,
Deep skilled in all his mother's witcheries,
And here to every thirsty wanderer
By sly enticement gives his baneful cup,
With many murmurs mixed, whose pleasing poison
The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious likeness of a beast
Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage
Charactered in the face. This I have learnt
Tending my flocks hard by i' the hilly crofts
That brow this bottom glade; whence night by night
He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl
Like stabled wolves, or tigers at their prey,
Doing abhorred rites to Hecate
In their obscured haunts of inmost bowers.
Yet have they many baits, and guileful spells
To inveigle and invite the unwary sense
Of them that pass unweeting by the way.
This evening late, by then the chewing flocks
Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb
Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold,
I sat me down to watch upon a bank
With ivy canopied, and interwove
With flaunting honeysuckle, and began,
Wrapt in a pleasing fit of melancholy,
To meditate my rural minstrelsy,

Till fancy had her fill. But ere a close
The wonted roar was up amidst the woods,
And filled the air with barbarous dissonance;
At which I ceased, and listened them a while,
Till an unusual stop of sudden silence
Gave respite to the drowsy-flighted steeds
That draw the litter of close-curtained Sleep.
At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound
Rose like a steam of rich distilled perfumes,
And stole upon the air, that even Silence
Was took ere she was ware, and wished she might
Deny her nature, and be never more,
Still to be so displaced. I was all ear,
And took in strains that might create a soul
Under the ribs of Death. But oh! ere long
Too well I did perceive it was the voice
Of my most honoured Lady, your dear sister.
Amazed I stood, harrowed with grief and fear;
And 'O poor hapless nightingale,' thought I,
'How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!'
Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,
Through paths and turnings often trod by day,
Till, guided by mine ear, I found the place
Where that damned wizard, hid in sly disguise
(For so by certain signs I knew), had met
Already, ere my best speed could prevent,
The aidless innocent lady, his wished prey;
Who gently asked if he had seen such two,
Supposing him some neighbour villager.
Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guessed

Ye were the two she meant; with that I sprung
Into swift flight, till I had found you here;
But further know I not.

SECOND BROTHER. O night and shades,
How are ye joined with hell in triple knot
Against the unarmed weakness of one virgin,
Alone and helpless! Is this the confidence
You gave me, brother?

ELDER BROTHER. Yes, and keep it still;
Lean on it safely; not a period
Shall be unsaid for me. Against the threats
Of malice or of sorcery, or that power
Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm:
Virtue may be assailed, but never hurt,
Surprised by unjust force, but not enthralled;
Yea, even that which Mischief meant most harm
Shall in the happy trial prove most glory.
But evil on itself shall back recoil,
And mix no more with goodness, when at last,
Gathered like scum, and settled to itself,
It shall be in eternal restless change
Self-fed and self-consumed. If this fail,
The pillared firmament is rottenness,
And earth's base built on stubble. But come, let's on!
Against the opposing will and arm of Heaven
May never this just sword be lifted up;
But, for that damned magician, let him be girt
With all the griesly legions that troop
Under the sooty flag of Acheron,
Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms

'Twixt Africa and Ind, I'll find him out,
And force him to return his purchase back,
Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,
Cursed as his life.

SPIRIT. Alas! good venturous youth,
I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise;
But here thy sword can do thee little stead.
Far other arms and other weapons must
Be those that quell the might of hellish charms.
He with his bare wand can unthread thy joints,
And crumble all thy sinews.

ELDER BROTHER. Why, prithee, Shepherd,
How durst thou then thyself approach so near
As to make this relation?

SPIRIT. Care and utmost shifts
How to secure the Lady from surprisal
Brought to my mind a certain shepherd lad,
Of small regard to see to, yet well skilled
In every virtuous plant and healing herb
That spreads her verdant leaf to the morning ray.
He loved me well, and oft would beg me sing;
Which when I did, he on the tender grass
Would sit, and hearken even to ecstasy,
And in requital ope his leathern scrip,
And show me simples of a thousand names,
Telling their strange and vigorous faculties.
Among the rest a small unsightly root,
But of divine effect, he culled me out.
The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
But in another country, as he said,

Bore a bright golden flower, but not in this soil:
Unknown, and like esteemed, and the dull swain
Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon;
And yet more med'cinal is it than that Moly
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave.
He called it Hæmony, and gave it me,
And bade me keep it as of sovran use
'Gainst all enchantments, mildew, blast, or damp,
Or ghastly Furies' apparition.
I pursed it up, but little reckoning made,
Till now that this extremity compelled.
But now I find it true; for by this means
I knew the foul enchanter, though disguised,
Entered the very lime-twigs of his spells,
And yet came off. If you have this about you
(As I will give you when we go) you may
Boldly assault the necromancer's hall;
Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood
And brandished blade rush on him; break his glass,
And shed the luscious liquor on the ground;
But seize his wand. Though he and his curst crew
Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,
Or, like the sons of Vulcan, vomit smoke,
Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink.

ELDER BROTHER. Thyrsis, lead on apace; I'll follow
And some good angel bear a shield before us. [thee;

The Scene changes to a stately Palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness: soft music, tables spread with all dainties. Comus appears with his rabble, and THE LADY *set in an enchanted chair: to whom he offers his glass; which she puts by, and goes about to rise.*

COMUS. Nay, Lady, sit. If I but wave this wand,
Your nerves are all chained up in alabaster,
And you a statue, or as Daphne was,
Root-bound, that fled Apollo.
LADY. Fool, do not boast.
Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind
With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
Thou hast immanacled, while Heaven sees good.
COMUS. Why are you vexed, Lady? why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
Sorrow flies far. See, here be all the pleasures
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the April buds in primrose season.
And first behold this cordial julep here,
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,
With spirits of balm, and fragrant syrups mixed.
Not that Nepenthes which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.
Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
And to those dainty limbs, which Nature lent

For gentle usage and soft delicacy?
But you invert the covenants of her trust,
And harshly deal, like an ill borrower,
With that which you received on other terms,
Scorning the unexempt condition
By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
That have been tired all day without repast,
And timely rest have wanted. But, fair virgin,
This will restore all soon.

LADY. 'T will not, false traitor!
'T will not restore the truth and honesty
That thou hast banished from thy tongue with lies.
Was this the cottage and the safe abode
Thou told'st me of? What grim aspects are these,
These ougly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me!
Hence with thy brewed enchantments, foul deceiver!
Hast thou betrayed my credulous innocence
With vizored falsehood and base forgery?
And wouldst thou seek again to trap me here
With liquorish baits, fit to ensnare a brute?
Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,
I would not taste thy treasonous offer. None
But such as are good men can give good things:
And that which is not good is not delicious
To a well-governed and wise appetite.

COMUS. O foolishness of men! that lend their ears
To those budge doctors of the Stoic fur,
And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,
Praising the lean and sallow Abstinence!

Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth
With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,
Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,
But all to please and sate the curious taste?
And set to work millions of spinning worms,
That in their green shops weave the smooth-haired silk,
To deck her sons; and, that no corner might
Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
She hutched the all-worshipped ore and precious gems,
To store her children with. If all the world
Should, in a pet of temperance, feed on pulse,
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
The All-giver would be unthanked, would be unpraised,
Not half his riches known, and yet despised;
And we should serve him as a grudging master,
As a penurious niggard of his wealth,
And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
Who would be quite surcharged with her own weight,
And strangled with her waste fertility:
The earth cumbered, and the winged air darked with plumes,
The herds would over-multitude their lords;
The sea o'erfraught would swell, and the unsought diamonds
Would so emblaze the forehead of the deep,
And so bestud with stars, that they below
Would grow inured to light, and come at last
To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.
List, Lady; be not coy, and be not cozened
With that same vaunted name, Virginity.
Beauty is Nature's coin; must not be hoarded,

But must be current; and the good thereof
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
Unsavoury in the enjoyment of itself.
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
It withers on the stalk with languished head.
Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown
In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,
Where most may wonder at the workmanship.
It is for homely features to keep home;
They had their name thence: coarse complexions,
And cheeks of sorry grain will serve to ply
The sampler, and to tease the huswife's wool.
What need a vermeil-tinctured lip for that,
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?
There was another meaning in these gifts;
Think what, and be advised; you are but young yet.

LADY. I had not thought to have unlocked my lips
In this unhallowed air, but that this juggler
Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes,
Obtruding false rules pranked in reason's garb.
I hate when vice can bolt her arguments
And virtue has no tongue to check her pride.
Impostor! do not charge most innocent Nature,
As if she would her children should be riotous
With her abundance. She, good cateress,
Means her provision only to the good,
That live according to her sober laws,
And holy dictate of spare Temperance.
If every just man that now pines with want
Had but a moderate and beseeming share

Of that which lewdly-pampered Luxury
Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
Nature's full blessings would be well-dispensed
In unsuperfluous even proportion,
And she no whit encumbered with her store;
And then the Giver would be better thanked,
His praise due paid: for swinish gluttony
Ne'er looks to Heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,
But with besotted base ingratitude
Crams, and blasphemes his Feeder. Shall I go on?
Or have I said enow? To him that dares
Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
Against the sun-clad power of chastity
Fain would I something say;—yet to what end?
Thou hast nor ear, nor soul, to apprehend
The sublime notion and high mystery
That must be uttered to unfold the sage
And serious doctrine of Virginity,
And thou art worthy that thou shouldst not know
More happiness than this thy present lot.
Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric,
That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence;
Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinced.
Yet, should I try, the uncontrollèd worth
Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits
To such a flame of sacred vehemence
That dumb things would be moved to sympathize,
And the brute Earth would lend her nerves, and shake,
Till all thy magic structures, reared so high,
Were shattered into heaps o'er thy false head.

COMUS. She fables not. I feel that I do fear
Her words set off by some superior power;
And, though not mortal, yet a cold shuddering dew
Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
Speaks thunder and the chains of Erebus
To some of Saturn's crew. I must dissemble,
And try her yet more strongly. — Come, no more!
This is mere moral babble, and direct
Against the canon laws of our foundation.
I must not suffer this; yet 't is but the lees
And settlings of a melancholy blood.
But this will cure all straight; one sip of this
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste. . . .

The BROTHERS *rush in with swords drawn, wrest his glass out of his hand, and break it against the ground: his rout make sign of resistance, but are all driven in. The* ATTENDANT SPIRIT *comes in.*

SPIRIT. What! have you let the false enchanter scape?
O ye mistook; ye should have snatched his wand,
And bound him fast. Without his rod reversed,
And backward mutters of dissevering power.
We cannot free the Lady that sits here
In stony fetters fixed and motionless.
Yet stay: be not disturbed; now I bethink me,
Some other means I have which may be used,
Which once of Melibœus old I learnt,
The soothest shepherd that e'er piped on plains.

There is a gentle Nymph not far from hence,
That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream:
Sabrina is her name: a virgin pure;
Whilom she was the daughter of Locrine,
That had the sceptre from his father Brute.
She, guiltless damsel, flying the mad pursuit
Of her enragèd stepdame, Guendolen,
Commended her fair innocence to the flood
That stayed her flight with his cross-flowing course.
The water-nymphs that in the bottom played,
Held up their pearlèd wrists, and took her in,
Bearing her straight to aged Nereus' hall;
Who, piteous of her woes, reared her lank head,
And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
In nectared lavers strowed with asphodil,
And through the porch and inlet of each sense
Dropped in ambrosial oils, till she revived,
And underwent a quick immortal change,
Made Goddess of the river. Still she retains
Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
Visits the herds along the twilight meadows,
Helping all urchin blasts, and ill-luck signs
That the shrewd meddling elf delights to make,
Which she with precious vialed liquors heals:
For which the shepherds, at their festivals,
Carol her goodness loud in rustic lays,
And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream
Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils.
And, as the old swain said, she can unlock
The clasping charm, and thaw the numbing spell

If she be right invoked in warbled song;
For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift
To aid a virgin, such as was herself,
In hard-besetting need. This will I try,
And add the power of some adjuring verse.

SONG.

Sabrina fair,
Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
In twisted braids of lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
Listen for dear honour's sake,
Goddess of the silver lake,
Listen and save!
Listen and appear to us,
In name of great Oceanus,
By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
And Tethys' grave majestic pace;
By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,
And the Carpathian wizard's hook;
By scaly Triton's winding shell,
And old soothsaying Glaucus' spell,
By Leucothea's lovely hands,
And her son that rules the strands;
By Thetis' tinsel-slippered feet,
And the songs of Sirens sweet;
By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
And fair Ligea's golden comb,

Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks
Sleeking her soft alluring locks;
By all the nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance:
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head
From thy coral-paven bed,
And bridle in thy headlong wave,
Till thou our summons answered have.
Listen and save!

SABRINA *rises, attended by Water-Nymphs, and sings.*

By the rushy-fringèd bank,
Where grows the willow and the osier dank,
My sliding chariot stays,
Thick set with agate, and the azurn sheen
Of turkis blue, and emerald green,
That in the channel strays;
Whilst from off the waters fleet
Thus I set my printless feet
O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
That bends not as I tread.
Gentle swain, at thy request
I am here!

SPIRIT. Goddess dear,
We implore thy powerful hand
To undo the charmèd band
Of true virgin here distressed
Through the force, and through the wile
Of unblessed enchanter vile.

SABRINA. Shepherd, 't is my office best
To help ensnarèd chastity.
Brightest Lady, look on me.
Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
Drops that from my fountain pure
I have kept of precious cure;
Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
Thrice upon thy rubied lip:
Next this marble venomed seat,
Smeared with gums of glutinous heat,
I touch with chaste palms moist and cold.
Now the spell hath lost his hold;
And I must haste ere morning hour
To wait in Amphitrite's bower.

SABRINA *descends, and the* LADY *rises out of her seat.*

SPIRIT. Virgin, daughter of Locrine,
Sprung of old Anchises' line,
May thy brimmèd waves for this
Their full tribute never miss
From a thousand petty rills,
That tumble down the snowy hills:
Summer drouth or singèd air
Never scorch thy tresses fair,
Nor wet October's torrent flood
Thy molten crystal fill with mud;
May thy billows roll ashore
The beryl and the golden ore;
May thy lofty head be crowned

With many a tower and terrace round,
And here and there thy banks upon
With groves of myrrh and cinnamon.
Come, Lady; while Heaven lends us grace,
Let us fly this cursed place,
Lest the sorcerer us entice
With some other new device.
Not a waste or needless sound
Till we come to holier ground.
I shall be your faithful guide
Through this gloomy covert wide;
And not many furlongs thence
Is your Father's residence,
Where this night are met in state
Many a friend to gratulate
His wished presence, and beside
All the swains that there abide,
With jigs and rural dance resort.
We shall catch them at their sport,
And our sudden coming there
Will double all their mirth and cheer.
Come, let us haste; the stars grow high,
But Night sits monarch yet in the mid sky.

The scene changes, presenting Ludlow town and the President's Castle: then come in Country Dancers, after them the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, *with two* BROTHERS, *and the* LADY.

SONG.

SPIRIT. Back, shepherds, back! Enough your play,
Till next sun-shine holiday.
Here be, without duck or nod,
Other trippings to be trod
Of lighter toes, and such court guise
As Mercury did first devise,
With the mincing Dryades
On the lawns and on the leas.

This second Song presents them to their Father and Mother.

Noble Lord and Lady bright,
I have brought ye new delight.
Here behold so goodly grown
Three fair branches of your own.
Heaven hath timely tried their youth,
Their faith, their patience, and their truth,
And sent them here through hard assays
With a crown of deathless praise,
To triumph in victorious dance
O'er sensual folly, and intemperance.

The dances ended, the Spirit epiloguizes.

SPIRIT. To the ocean now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye,
Up in the broad fields of the sky.
There I suck the liquid air,
All amidst the gardens fair
Of Hesperus, and his daughters three
That sing about the golden tree.
Along the crispèd shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocund Spring;
The Graces and the rosy-bosomed Hours
Thither all their bounties bring.
There eternal Summer dwells,
And west-winds with musky wing
About the cedarn alleys fling
Nard and cassia's balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks, that blow
Flowers of more mingled hue
Than her purfled scarf can shew,
And drenches with Elysian dew
(List, mortals, if your ears be true)
Beds of hyacinth and roses,
Where young Adonis oft reposes,
Waxing well of his deep wound,
In slumber soft, and on the ground

Sadly sits the Assyrian queen.
But far above in spangled sheen,
Celestial Cupid, her famed son, advanced,
Holds his dear Psyche, sweet entranced
After her wandering labors long,
Till free consent the gods among
Make her his eternal bride,
And from her fair unspotted side
Two blissful twins are to be born,
Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn.
But now my task is smoothly done:
I can fly, or I can run
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bowed welkin slow doth bend,
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the moon.
Mortals, that would follow me,
Love Virtue; she alone is free.
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

LYCIDAS.

In this Monody the author bewails a learned friend, unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish seas, 1637; and, by occasion, foretells the ruin of our corrupted Clergy, then in their height.

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more,
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I ~~come to pluck your~~ berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear
Compels me to disturb your season due;
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer:
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well
That from beneath the seat of ~~Jove~~ doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.

Hence with denial vain and coy excuse:
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favour *my* destined urn,
And as he passes turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud!
For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill.
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the Morn,
We drove a-field, and both together heard
What time the grey-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star that rose at evening bright
Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute;
Tempered to the oaten flute
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long;
And old Damœtas loved to hear our song.
But, oh! the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes, mourn.
The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,

When first the white-thorn blows;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherds' ear.
Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream.
Ay me! I fondly dream
"Had ye been there," . . . for what could that have done?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?
Alas! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
Were it not better done as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears:

"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed."
O fountain Arethuse, and thou honoured flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood.
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the Herald of the Sea
That came in Neptune's plea;
He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain?
And questioned every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beaked promontory.
They knew not of his story;
And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed:
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters played.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.
Next, Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.
"Ah! who hath reft," quoth he, "my dearest pledge?"

Last came, and last did go,
The Pilot of the Galilean lake;
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain).
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake: —
"How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as, for their bellies' sake,
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold!
Of other care they little reckoning make
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learned aught else the least
That to the faithful herdsman's art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
And when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swoln with wind, and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread;
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said.
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."
Return, Alpheus; the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,

On whose fresh lap the swart-star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honied showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears;
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
For so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise,
Ay me! Whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled;
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great Vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold:
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth:
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.
  Weep no more, woful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor.

So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves,
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the Saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals grey:
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropped into the western bay.
At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue:
To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

NOTES ON L'ALLEGRO.

LINE 2. **Cerberus.** The dog that guarded the entrance to Hades and Night is a poetic fancy, to give Melancholy a sufficiently uncanny parentage. In the same way Spenser makes Corceca the mother of Abessa, i.e. Blind Devotion parent to Ignorance. See Faery Queene, Book I., canto iii.

3. **In Stygian Cave.** The kennel of Cerberus.

6. **Jealous wings.** A particularly good adjective, bringing to the mind the super-solicitude of anything that broods.

9. **Ragged.** If Milton intended this word, it is the only time that he uses it, while he uses "rugged" six times. Cf. Isa. ii. 21.

10. **Cimmerian.** The mythical Cimmerii dwelt in the farthest west, in a land of mists and darkness; the less legendary tradition localizes them in the vicinity of the Black Sea.

10-24. Again Milton prefers to create his own mythology, and instead of making the three Graces, Euphrosyne, Aglaia, and Thalia, children of Zeus and Hera, gives one a choice of two new pedigrees that spring from his own poetic fancy.

11. **Fair and free.** A favorite phrase used by Chaucer, Drayton, Tennyson, and others.

17. **Sager.** i.e., wiser ones.

20. **A-Maying.** Old form of "on Maying." Cf. St. John xxi. 3.

24. **Buxom, blithe, and debonair.** Note alliteration and word origins.

26-28. Here is offered an excellent lesson in definition with fine distinctions. See Dictionary.

29. **Hebe.** The goddess of youth, and cup-bearer to the gods till succeeded by Ganymede. Cf. Comus l. 290.

41-80. **To hear the lark . . . cynosure of neighbouring eyes.** A dawn song, with few peers, and only one superior in Romeo and Juliet, Act iii., Scene 5.

60-61. **Where the great sun begins his state**, etc. Cf., Shakespeare's Sonnet XXXIII.

67. **Every shepherd tells his tale.** The better scholars interpret this line "counts his sheep," not, at so early a period in the day, interchanges stories with his rustic neighbours. Cf. Exod. v. 18.

69. **Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures.** A quick transition from a contemplation of the foreground to the more inspiring breadth of the background of the picture.

75. **Meadows trim with daisies pied.** Cf. "When daisies pied and violets blue." Shakespeare's Love's Labour's Lost, Act v., Scene 2.

80. **Cynosure.** "Cynosura, dog's tail," the constellation of the Lesser Bear, by which the Phœnician mariners directed their course. In Hacket's Life of Williams, the Countess of Buckingham is called "the Cynosura that all the Papists steered by."

81-86. As the poem proceeds, so has the beautiful day, and we are now at high noontide; at last, in the ninety-ninth line, the "livelong daylight" fails.

83. **Where Corydon and Thyrsis met . . . Phillis . . . Thestylis.** These names in pastoral poetry date back to classical literature, as in Virgil's Eclogues, where Corydon is a lovesick swain.

91-92. The scene changes in time to afternoon; in place, to the village.

94. **Rebecks.** A three-stringed musical instrument somewhat like the violin. Shakespeare, as ingeniously as Dickens, calls the fiddler at Juliet's wedding Hugh Rebeck. Romeo and Juliet, Act iv., Scene 5.

> "He tuned his rebec to a mournful note." — *Drayton.*

96. **Chequered shade.**

> "The green leaves quiver with the cooling wind,
> And make a chequered shadow on the ground."
> *Titus Andronicus*, ii., 3.

98. **On a sunshine holiday.** Milton loves this phrase, for it is repeated in Comus, l. 95. Shakespeare also used sunshine for sunshiny. Richard II., iv., 1.

100. A third transition, by which we are introduced to rustic evening occupations.

102. **How Faery Mab the junkets eat.** Queen Mab has had

many portrayals in literature, but all are distanced by the exquisite picture in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, Act i., Scene 4. l. 54–99. For other descriptions see "This is Mab, the mistress fair," in Ben Jonson's The Satyr, Herrick in The Hesperides, Drayton in his Nimphidia, Walter Scott in The Antiquary. According to Shakespeare, she is the Faery's midwife, employed to deliver men's brains of dreams. "Junkets," cream-cheese, a word of interesting derivation.

103–104. Here follows what in to-day's parlance would be "he said" and "she said," by a third person who is telling the story.

104. **And he by Friar's lantern led.** Milton uses the expression as a synonym of Jack o' lantern; but in Demonology it is Friar Rush who is the house spirit called by the Scotch, Brownie and the North English, Lob-lie-by-the-Fire. Robin Goodfellow, the Friar of the Lantern, Will o' the Wisp or Puck, is an outdoor spirit. Scott, in Marmion, follows Milton, however, and says, —

> "Better we had through mire and bush
> Been lanthern-led by Friar Rush."
>
> *Marmion.*

106. **Tells how the drudging goblin sweat.** Another of the fraternity, sometimes called Hobgoblin, and at his best Puck of Shakespeare. He seems to have been a gay companion to Queen Mab, who does for men in the way of assistance or hindrance what Mab does for women. "I am the honest, plain country spirit and harmless Robin Goodfellow" (Lover Restored: Ben Jonson). No better illustration could be given of the nth power to which Shakespeare raises his characters than to compare other Robin Goodfellows of the Elizabethan age with his tricksy Puck to whom all mortals are fools.

117. **Towered cities please us then.** Again a transition indicated as before by "*then*," the youth of "pale intellectual cast," after his day given to pastoral delights, instead of following the rustics to be lulled to sleep by "whispering winds," lingers to read his favorite authors. He gives himself up to the delight of old days, of knights and tourneys, of wedding festivals, and after, to the drama of Ben Jonson or Shakespeare so near his own time that it is as if we read to-day in the same spirit, Tennyson and Browning after a day of outdoor pleasure among rustic people. Ben Jonson was made Poet Laureate in 1619.

120. **Weeds of peace.** The common poetic term for clothing used

often in Elizabethan writers. Viola dislikes to appear before she has doffed her "woman's weeds." Twelfth Night, iv., 1.

122. **Rain influence.** A figure from astrology, used also in the Ode on the Nativity.

125–126. **There let Hymen . . . taper clear.** Hymen, in classical literature, is a sort of overgrown Cupid, bearing a torch and veil. His colors are yellow, as are the marriage colors to-day in some countries. The scenery suggested is that common to the Masque so popular in Shakespeare's time. See Bacon's Essay Of Masques and Triumphs.

131. Another transition announced by the reiterated "then" when the reading that has been romance now turns to the drama.

132. **If Jonson's learnèd sock be on.** The sock indicated the comedy; the buskin, tragedy.

133–134. **Or sweetest Shakespeare,** etc. Though this passage is often quoted to prove Milton's appreciation of Shakespeare, a much more adequate conception of the poet is found in Milton's On Shakespeare, written in 1630 and prefacing the Second Folio Shakespeare.

135–136. **And ever . . . soft Lydian airs.** The softest and sweetest music was to accompany or succeed this æsthetic evening. Lydian music was voluptuous as contrasted with Phrygian or Dorian.

139. **Bout, bend, or turn.** Spenser, in using the word, spells it "bought," as from bow.

145–150. **That Orpheus' self may . . . . half regained Eurydice.** Orpheus, grieving for the loss of his wife Eurydice, went to Hades to recover her. His music charmed consent from Pluto for her return to earth, qualified by the condition that he should look not back till he had gained upper air. The test was too severe, and looking back to see if she followed, he only saw her slowly receding from him.

> "O Proserpina,
> For the flowers now, that frighted thou let'st fall
> From Dis's wagon! daffodils,
> That come before the swallow dares, and take
> The winds of March with beauty; violets dim,
> But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes
> Or Cytherea's breath."
>
> *Winter's Tale*, iv., 3.

151. Cf. Eccles. viii., 15.

NOTES ON IL PENSEROSO.

LINE 3. **Bested.** To stand by. "I never saw a fellow worse bested." 2 Henry VI., ii., 3.

6. **Gaudy.** From the Old English "gaud."

8. **As the gay motes,** etc. This line is a memory of Chaucer's—

"As thick as motes in the sonne beams."

10. **Pensioners.** Retinue; Queen Elizabeth had such a guard whom she called her pensioners. Shakespeare also uses the word in Midsummer Night's Dream, ii., 1.

"The cowslips tall, her pensioners be."

18. **Prince Memnon's sister.** Prince Memnon was the beautiful Ethiopian son of Tithonus and Eos, who came to the aid of Priam, towards the close of the Trojan War, and was slain by Achilles. See Odyssey, Book XI. Dewdrops in Greek poetry are called "Aurora's tears for Memnon."

19-21. **Or that starred Ethiop queen . . . offended.** Cassiope, queen of the Ethiopians, who was so audacious as to compare her beauty to that of the Nereids, and was a sacrifice to her ambition. She was transferred to the skies and became the constellation known as Cassiopeia, which in old maps was represented as a black woman studded with stars, according to Milton's adjective. Milton's version makes Cassiope the victim of Neptune's wrath; but in classical history, Andromeda, her daughter, pays the penalty of boasted beauty.

23-30. **Thee, bright-haired Vesta . . . no fear of Jove.** This genealogy is, as in the parentage of Mirth, an inventon of Milton. Saturn, the god from whom we make our adjective "Saturnine,"

wedded to the virgin Vesta of the hearthstone, makes no unfitting origin for solitary thought.

Mr. Warton thinks Milton's inmost idea was that Melancholy is the daughter of Solitude and Genius. The "pensive nun" of the next line gives some light on this rendering.

25. **His daughter she.** i.e., she was his daughter.

26. **Woody Ida.** On Mt. Ida, in the island of Crete, was the temple to Cybele surrounded by groves.

33. **Grain.** From a small seed this came to mean a colour or dye.

35. **Sable stole of cypress lawn.** Black lawn scarf, probably from the Isle of Cyprus, as Shakespeare has also in the wares peddled by Autolycus, —

> "Lawn as white as driven snow,
> Cyprus black as e'er was crow."
>
> *Winter's Tale*, iv., 4.

39. **Commerc'ing.** Note the accent on the second syllable: it is used in this sense by Shakespeare.

42. **Forget thyself to marble.** This phrase recurs in Milton's On Shakespeare. He is fond of repeating favourite phrases, as has been already noted. Cf. the phrase, "I was petrified with fright."

51–54. **But first and chiefest . . . Contemplation.** See Ezekiel, chapter x. Milton presumes to name one of the Ezekelian cherubs, and calls him by a name of his own.

55–56. **And the mute silence . . . a song.** i.e., Keep up the mute silence unless there be an interruption by Philomel, the nightingale. This is an unusual use of "list" as a verb. Cf.

> "After jangling words cometh huiste, peacé and be stille."
>
> *Chaucer.*

59. **While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke.** The fascinated Moon is supposed to stop her chariot drawn of dragons to listen; but in old Mythology it was the chariot of Demeter that was drawn of dragons.

> "Night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast."
>
> *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii., 2.

61–64. Milton delights in the nightingale, as is seen not only in this familiar passage, but in the Sonnet to the Nightingale, Comus, pp. 566–567, and by several allusions in Paradise Lost.

67. **Wandering Moon.** The moon with all poets is ever a vagrant, unheld of fixed laws. Both Horace and Virgil use the same expression.

> "Wandering companionless
> Among the stars that bear a different birth."
>
> *Shelley.*

74. **Curfew.** The curfew ringing, which was the signal for the putting out of hearthstone fires since the days of William the Conqueror, was still held in practice in Milton's time, and yet survives in a few rural parts of England.

75. The impossibility of locating the scene of this passage at Horton, Oxford, or Windsor is good proof of its existence only in Poet Land.

83. **Bellman's drowsy charm.** This is a reference to a pleasing custom retained still in some German towns, where watchmen announce, at the striking of the hour, the condition of the weather and the peace of the environments. Shakespeare also has "sullen bell." See Herrick's charming poem of The Bellman.

87. **Where I may outwatch the bear.** Implying that in this mood he would keep his vigil till morning, since the bear would fade out, not set in his sky.

Plato. The Athenian philosopher and the most distinguished pupil of Socrates, 429 (?) -347 B.C.

88. **With thrice-great Hermes.** The Egyptian king called by the Greeks, Hermes Trismegistus, or thrice-great.

89-92-96. This passage entire is in evident reference to the discussion of the immortality of the soul, as found in the Phædo and Timæus, though the demons of the flood, fire, air, etc., belong to the later students of Plato.

93. **And of those demons.** An interesting ellipsis called zeugma by rhetoricians.

97. **Sometime let gorgeous tragedy,** etc. As Comedy suited the mood of L'Allegro, now Tragedy suits this serious strain.

99-100. **Presenting Thebes . . . Troy divine.** i.e., whose stories have formed subjects for the great Greek dramatists Æschylus (Seven against Thebes) Sophocles (Antigone or Œdipus) Euripides, (Bacchæ).

101-102. **Or what . . . buskined stage.** Here would have been an excellent occasion for Milton to still further show his literary

discernment in honouring Shakespeare by making him fit companion of the Greek dramatists. Many think it was indicated sufficiently to signify none other, though the fear of Ben Jonson before his eyes might have prevented the young poet, who was so soon to fear nothing in life or death, from a frank acknowledgment of this preference.

103–120. Here is a true lament for lost literature to which might be added many lost treasures in English poetry.

110. **The story of Cambuscan bold.** Chaucer's Squire's Tale that was left unfinished. Cambuscan was the father of Canace, to whom the King of Araby and Ind sent the magic ring and mirror. The ring told the language of every bird that sang, and the glass all that was happening in the world. They were brought by a knight—

> "Upon a steed of brass,
> And in his hand a broad mirror of glass;
> Upon his thumb he had of gold a ring."
>
> *Chaucer.*

116–119. These lines might allude to much literature of a romantic type, doubtless familiar to Milton, as Ariosto, Tasso, Spenser.

122. **Civil-suited morn.** Dressed in civilian's suit, not in her gayest apparel as in L'Allegro.

124. **The Attic Boy.** Cephalus, the son of Diomede and Deion, who was loved of Aurora, the Dawn.

128. **His fill.** "Its," as we use it to-day, was studiously avoided by Milton, who uses "its" but three times in all his poems.

130. **Minute-drops.** i.e., falling at frequent steady intervals.

134. **Sylvan loves.** Subjects of the god Sylvanus. See Spenser's Faery Queene. Book I., Canto 6.

147–150. **And let some strange . . . . on my eyelids laid.** This is a rather obscure passage, as if dreams had already taken possession of the poet sleeper. Without the changes substituted by commentators, the rendering seems to be that dreams should flow off the wings of sleep as in a stream on the dreamer.

151. **And as I wake.** Milton seems not satisfied with the transpositions afforded by the "thens" of L'Allegro, and allowing for a clearer understanding on the part of his readers, makes no attempt to indicate the changes of locality. He now enters first the student-cloister that is quickly changed for the more imposing and impressive cathedral. For the first time Il Penseroso is in contact with his fellow men, but not as in L'Allegro in their secular life, in which

he might not really have part, but in an act of worship before God, where all come in one common attitude and spirit.

158. **Massy proof.** i.e., proof against the weight they support.

159. **Storied windows richly dight.** Windows whose subjects were stories from the Bible or ecclesiastical history.

167–176. Scott, in the Introduction to Canto II. of Marmion, recalls this passage, in the lines

> "Here have I thought 'twere sweet to dwell,
> And rear again the chaplain's cell,
> Like that same peaceful hermitage
> Where Milton longed to spend his age."

Almost as peaceful and retired an old age as he coveted in his youth was granted Milton; but vexed with the memory of a cause lost, it is doubtful if it yielded all the proposed tranquillity.

170–174. A memory perchance of Friar Laurence in Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet.

Note: L'Allegro does not provide for old age; it is too happy to be fore-seeing.

NOTES ON COMUS.

The first scene discovers a wild wood. The *Attendant Spirit* descends or enters.

LINE 3. **Insphered.** Milton, like every poet, has his favourite words. Insphered is one, as we have seen in both L'Allegro and Il Penseroso.

7. **Confined and pestered in this pinfold here.** "Pestered," Masson thinks from *pestis*, a plague; Todd, *pesta*, a crowd; but why not from the French, *empêtrer*, to entangle? "Pinfold," a sheep enclosure, from Anglo-Saxon *pyndan;* our word, "pound," is from the same source.

9–11. **Unmindful of the crown . . . on sainted seats. Amongst the enthroned gods.** Rev. iv., 4, 11.

13. **That Golden Key.** Art and the Church have traditionally given to St. Peter *two* keys, a golden one to open, an iron to shut, the gates of Heaven. See Lycidas, 110–111.

16. **Ambrosial weeds.** Ambrosial is used here in its true signification of immortal "weeds." See L'Allegro, 120.

20. **Took in by lot 'twixt high and nether Jove.** See Book XV. Homer's Iliad. Also Paradise Lost, II., 295. Other authors have named Pluto, Nether Jove. A rather ambiguous reading is here, but the natural interpretation is the best.

26. **Several.** Separate. Cf. the verb "to sever."

27–28. **This Isle . . . all the Main.** Milton had not reached his period of patriotism. Cf. with this meek expression the passages in King John, Act. v., Sc. 7, lines 116–117, or Richard II., ii., 1.

29. **He quarters to his blue-haired deities.** i.e., divides among. "Blue-haired" tasks my comprehension, as Neptune's petty gods were green-haired.

30. **All this tract.** Wales in its entirety.

31–33. **A noble peer . . . proud in arms.** This reference, like the famous Shakesperian passage which is supposed to compliment Elizabeth, is a deferential passage in compliment of the Earl of Bridgewater, Viceroy of Wales, among the onlookers at this festival given at his cost.

40. **Tender age.** Lady Alice was about fourteen, her brother still younger.

46–50. The classical character of Milton's learning at so early a period is amply illustrated in his first attempts in verse. In these four and a half lines is compacted the story of Circe (see Classical Dictionary), a passage from the Odyssey, Book X., the Homeric Hymn to Bacchus, and one of Ovid's Metamorphoses, II., 660.

NOTE. The genealogy that follows is an invention of Milton.

50. **Who knows not Circe.** A good example of the rhetorical figure so frequently used by Macaulay.

54–58. **This nymph, etc.** This genealogy is of a type in which Milton delighted. Observe, Bacchus and Circe would be a sufficiently pronounced heredity for the character of Comus, the villain of his drama.

> "Much of the father's face,
> More of the mother's grace."

60. **The Celtic and Iberian fields.** Gaul and Spain.

61. **This ominous wood.** The adjacent wood was that of Shropshire, near the place of this performance.

66. **Phœbus.** The sun.

68–72. To change the faces gave a fine spectacular opportunity, for as Comus came on the stage he would be followed by a noisy crew who needed but to have the heads of the various animals represented as masks.

73–77. Note the difference in results, compared with the rendering of Circe's power by Homer, Odyssey, Book IX. Cf., Spenser's Faery Queene, II., xii., 86–87.

84–88. **And take the weeds . . . the waving woods.** Henry Lawes, the composer of the music, who was in the audience, thus has an Elizabethan compliment elegantly turned.

93. **The star that bids the shepherd fold.** Hesperus, or Venus. Note the change in metre.

> "Look, the unfolding star calls up the shepherd." — *Shakespeare.*

105. **Rosy twine.** Twined roses.

115. **Sounds and seas.** i.e., shallow straits and seas.

116. **Now to the moon . . . morrice move.** A dance imported from Spain.

129. **Dark-veiled Cotytto.** The Thracian goddess of immodesty, worshipped with nocturnal rites at Athens in ancient times.

135. **Hecat.** A triple deity much obscured in mythological shades. She is Phœbe in Heaven, Diana on earth, and Proserpina or Hecate in hell. Shakespeare includes all three in

"By the triple Hecate's team,"

but these are the darker uses, as in Macbeth.

138–142. **Ere the blabbing . . . concealed solemnity.** An old fable that the Sun discloses the mysteries or secrets of the night.

Nice. Fastidious.

143. Cf. Ariel's Song in The Tempest, Act i., 2.

144. **Light, fantastic.** See L'Allegro, lines 33–34.

146. **Chaste footing.** Cf. Lycidas, 103.

151. **Trains.** Allurements.

153–154. **Thus I hurl . . . spongy air.** Here undoubtedly an effect was produced on the stage by the burning of some chemical powder.

Comus suffers greatly from comparison with Puck and his antics in Midsummer Night's Dream.

167. **Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear. This** line is not found in the edition of 1673. "Gear," business.

178. **Swilled Insolence.** Drunken insolence.

179. **Wassailers.** Wassail, from the Anglo-Saxon *wæs hæl*, "your health!" used by the English anciently in drinking a health.

188–190. **They left me . . . Phœbus' wain.** The beauty of this figure, representing a sad palmer slowly following the chariot of the day, is apparent.

195. **Stole.** Reading of first and second editions.

205–209. **A thousand fantasies . . . wildernesses.** Compare Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's Dream, v., sc. 1, l. 14–17; The Tempest, Act iii., sc. 3.

212. **Con-sci-ence.** A trisyllable here.

213–225. Here is one of the best stage effects, as well as immortal passages of the poem. The introduction of the song that follows in

order to attract attention is not original, as one well recalls by reference to Ben Jonson's Cynthia's Revels, I., 1.

For the story of Echo and Narcissus, see Classical Dictionary.

253. **My mother Circe with the sirens three.** Circe sang, and Circe gathered herbs, and Circe had an attendant retinue; but this neighborly conjunction is Milton's own device. See Odyssey, Books X. and XI.

257–259. **Scylla wept . . . soft applause.** Glaucus, a fisherman, loved Scylla. Circe, in jealousy, changed her to a monster, when Scylla threw herself in the sea and became a rock. **Barking waves,** Virgil's Æneid, VII., 588, "*multis circum latrantibus undis.*"

259. **Charybdis.** A whirlpool on the coast of Sicily; mythologically a daughter of Poseidon hurled to the depths by the anger of Jove. There are other legends of her in classical lore. "Between Scylla and Charybdis" is a phrase well understood by those who do not know its origin.

265. **Hail, foreign wonder!** This exclamation in a vile mouth is not unlike the pure expression of Ferdinand when he first looked on Miranda. See The Tempest, i., 2.

267. **Unless the goddess.** Note the ellipsis.

268. **Pan or Sylvan.** "Pan," an Arcadian god of the shepherds; "Sylvan," the god of field and forest.

271. **Ill is lost.** A Latin idiom, *male perditur.*

277–290. A thoroughly classical form, such as is found again and again in Greek tragedies. Cf. The Maidens of Trachis at entrance of Lichas; also Creon and Oedipus in Oedipus at Colonos.

291. **What time.** This idiom for when is ever a favourite of the poets.

> "What time I am afraid I will trust in thee."
> "What time the shepherd blowing of his nails."
> "What time the grey-fly winds her sullen horn."

293. **Swinked.** Tired with labour.

297–304. **Their port was more than human.** A thinly disguised compliment to the sons, Lord Brackley and Thomas Egerton, who were now to come on the stage. The lines of Comus's address to the lady veil like praises of Alice Egerton.

The words of this speech are rather flowery and elegant for Comus in his guise as a shepherd.

301. **Plighted.** Plaited or folded.

317-318. **Or the low-roosted lark . . . rouse.** This phrase might have awakened inquiry as to Milton's knowledge of bird habits. Certainly it demands a figurative interpretation rather than the literal one suggested by Mr. Masson.

324-327. Here is possibly a beginning of the spirit of republicanism that characterized the life of Milton.

329. **Square my trial.** Adapt my trial.

341-342. See notes on L'Allegro, 180.

344. **Wattled cotes.** Pens made of braided twigs.

349. **Innumerous.** Also in Paradise Lost, VII., 455.

359. **Over exquisite.** Over curious.

373. **Virtue could see . . . radiant light.** Cf. Spenser's Faery Queene, I., i., 12. "Virtue gives herself light thro' darkness for to wade."

378. **Plumes.** Many commentators think better "prunes."

380. **All to-ruffled.** All too much ruffled. The hyphen is the work of editors.

381-382. No one more than Milton, both literally and figuratively, had to experience the truth of his own youthful sentiments.

382. **May sit i' the centre.** Centre of all things.

391. **Maple dish.** Sometimes other woods are named by the poets, especially beechen.

393-397. **Like the fair Hesperian tree . . . Incontinence.** Among Juno's wedding-gifts were the golden apples. These were placed under the ward of three nymphs, the Hesperides, who were assisted by the dragon Ladon. One of Hercules' labours was to obtain these apples by slaying the dragon. Read Tennyson's poem of The Hesperides.

401. **Danger will wink on opportunity.** Danger will not be true to his office as a police-officer, but fail intentionally to see. That suggests Shakespeare's "that runaway's eyes may wink," in Romeo and Juliet, Act iii., sc. 2.

413. **Squint suspicion.** Cf. Faery Queene, III., xii., 15.

422. **Like a quivered nymph.** A Virgilian suggestion of Diana. Cf. Spenser's Belphoebe, Faery Queene, II., iii., 29.

423. **Unharboured.** Unsheltered.

426. **Mountaineer.** A word that once had a bad sense as well as good. Cf. Cymbeline, Act. iv., scene ii., 1.

432–437. **Some say . . . true virginity.** There is distinct imitation here of the famous passage, "Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes." Cf. Hamlet, i., l., 173–179. Ghosts were supposed to be set free from curfew till cockcrow.

441–452. From a dialogue of Lucian.

453–475. This apotheosis of chastity expresses most clearly Milton's mind. He also writes these views again in prose when he defended his own character in the days of the Commonwealth. The philosophy oft is easily recalled in Plato's Phædo.

494–496. **Thyrsis . . . dale.** Thyrsis was a name common in pastorals, but the passage is in compliment again of Henry Lawes.

495–512. Note the insertion of a long unrhymed passage illustrative of the tune and time of Thyrsis. Contemporary poetry will be found to allow similar freaks.

520. **Navel.** Middle or centre.

529–530. **Unmoulding reason's mintage . . . face.** As in the melting of coin. Note the pronunciation of "charac`tered," a form of pronunciation retained by Mr. Lowell.

552. See line 145.

553. **Drowsy-flighted.** A beautiful word, but possibly the work of the commentators, since Milton has *drowsie-frighted.*

561. **And took in strains . . . of Death.** A memory of a picture in Quarles's Emblems, probably familiar to Milton, representing the soul in the form of a child, struggling to free itself from the form of a skeleton.

568. **Lawns.** Any grass-covered space in Elizabethan days is termed a lawn.

589–599. The ten lines here included was Milton's youthful Credo.

604. **Sooty flag of Acheron.** A figurative expression for the nether world. Cf. —

> "All hell run out, and sooty flags display."
>
> *Phineas Fletcher.*

605. **Harpies and Hydras.** The one, monsters with bodies of birds, and heads of maidens; the other, enormous water-serpents. See Classical Dictionary.

607. **Purchase.** This word is used in its primary meaning. See Dictionary.

619. **A certain sheperd lad.** This allusion is popularly sup-

posed to refer to Milton's dear friend, Charles Diodati, and his skill as a botanist.

627. **Simples.** Herbs used in the practice of medicine.

> "I do remember an apothecary.
> . . . which late I noted,
> In tattered weeds with overwhelming brows
> Culling of simples."
>
> *Romeo and Juliet*, v., 1.

636. **That Moly.** The herb which Hermes gave Ulysses defended him from the sorceries of Circe. See the Odyssey, Book X.

638. **Hæmony.** This name is another invention of Milton; Hæmonia was the former name of Thessaly.

639. **Sovereign.** Cf. "The most sovran prescription in Galen is but empiricutick.'— *Coriolanus*, ii., 1, 125.

642. **Lime-twigs.** An allusion to the practice of birdsnaring. See Dictionary.

651. **Break his glass.** Odyssey, X., Spenser's Faery Queene, II., xii., 56.

655. **Sons of Vulcan.** From Virgil's Æneid, Liber VIII., 252.

660. **Chained up in alabaster.** A favourite expression of Milton and Shakespeare to express a stiffened condition of the will.

661-662. **As Daphne was, root-bound.** Daphne fleeing Apollo was changed to a laurel-tree. Ovid, Metamorphoses, I.

675. **That Nepenthes.** See the Odyssey, Book IV. A drug that made one forget all sorrow.

695. **Oughly-headed.** Ugly-headed. The orthography is Milton's.

707. **Budge doctors of the Stoic fur.** This is a much disputed passage. Good sense would indicate that budge here meant burly, but budge was also the lamb's-wool fur worn by the Bachelor of Cambridge as a sign of his rank. "Fur" is used as we use "cloth," to denote the clergy.

708. **The Cynic tub.** The tub of Diogenes the Cynic.

719. **Hutched.** Stored.

743-744. **Like a neglected rose . . . with languished head.** A passage out-quoted by

> "Earthlier happy is the rose distilled," etc.
>
> *Midsummer Night's Dream*, I., l. 78.

745–746. **Must be shown . . . high solemnities.** Cf. Waller's

"Go, lovely rose."

760. **I hate when vice can bolt her arguments.** To sift as the bolting-mill sifts wheat from bran.

767. **Spare Temperance.** Dowden thinks the Lady here is indeed Milton, the Lady of his college, whose abstemious habits were his early as late culture.

"Distribution should undo excess,
And each man have enough."

King Lear, iv., i., 73.

791. **Fence.** Abridgment for defence.

804. **Speaks thunder and the chains of Erebus.** An allusion to the contest between Zeus and the Titans. See Classical Dictionary.

817. **Backward mutters.** In the lore of charms, the power of a charm is dispelled by a reversal of the performance.

822. **Melibœus.** Probably an allusion to Spenser, since Milton takes the Spenserian version of the Sabrina story, but Melibœus is a character in Virgil's Eclogue I.

823. **Soothest.** Truest.

824–858. The inweaving of the legend of the Sévern has a dramatic fitness that should be noted.

859–890. See Classical Dictionary if necessary for these familiar allusions.

894. **Turkis.** The turquoise, originally the Turkish stone.

897. **Printless feet.** Supernatural folk leave no mortal footprint.

921. **Amphitrite.** Goddess of the sea and wife of Neptune.

923. **Anchises' line.** Locrine, in mythological pedigrees, was a direct descendant of Anchises.

958. **Back, shepherds.** As the scene changes, the curtain rises on a peasant dance that with its awkward ducks and nods must now give way to the noble family to appear.

966–975. This song of presentation was sung by Lawes, the composer.

976. **To the ocean now I fly.** The student familiar with Shakespeare's Tempest will readily see where Milton found his model for his song.

982. **Hesperus and his daughters three.** Ægle, Cynthia, and Hesperia, daughters of Hesperus, were famous for their song.

999. **Adonis.** Adonis died of a wound received in the chase.

1002. **Assyrian queen.** Venus with reference to her identity with Astarte.

1003–1004. The story of Cupid and Psyche is too familiar to need reiteration. Its adaptation here is in the purified Psyche.

1020. She can teach you how to climb. Cf. —

> "To a stranger here on earth,
> In heaven she hath her right of birth.
> There, there is virtue's seat."
>
> *Ben Jonson's Song of Virtue.*

NOTES ON LYCIDAS.

LINE 1. **Yet once more.** Milton's last poetical production had been Comus, in 1634. It is to be observed that lines 1, 15, 22, 39, 51, 82, 91, 92, 161 are without rhymes.

1–2. **Laurels . . . myrtles . . . ivy.** The laurel was sacred to Apollo, the myrtle to Venus, the ivy to poets.

"*Doctarum hederæ praemia frontium*" (ivy that wreathes the brow of bards).—*Horace.*

> "In myrtle shades oft sings the happy swain,
> In myrtle shades despairing ghosts complain."
>
> *Dr. Johnson.*
>
> *(Request of a gentleman to whom a lady had given a sprig of myrtle.)*

3. **Harsh and Crude.** Alluding to the immaturity of Milton's poetic genius as viewed by himself.

4. **Forced fingers rude.** The reluctance of a true poet to write verses of occasion.

6. **Sad occasion dear.** Note the use of "dear." Cf.

> "Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven."
>
> *Hamlet*, i., ii., 182.

7 **Compels.** Here is an instance of a frequent usage in the earlier history of the language, when the close union of two nominatives is followed by a verb in the singular.

8. **Ere his prime.** Edward King was twenty-five years old.

10–11. **Who would not sing, etc.** A rhetorical construction for everybody would sing. Edward King had written verses in Latin and English that had already attracted attention to his talents.

13. **Welter.** To toss and tumble in the waves.

14. **Meed.** Reward. This is one of many words in this poem

that will afford the instructor an excellent illustration for the study of cognates. Milton uses "meed" but twice in all his poems. See line 85.

"A rosy garland was the victor's meed." *Spenser.*

NOTE. The rhyme with which this line ends has been thus far the dominant one.

15. **Sisters of the sacred well.** The fountains of the Muses were on Mount Helicon, and were called Aganippe and Hippocrene, but it was the Pierian Spring that sprang immediately from beneath Jove's seat.

21. **And as he passes.** He, as here used, refers to some poet inspired by the Muse, who may, in turn, write an elegy for Milton.

23–36. **For we were nursed . . . hear our song.** Notice the exquisite pastoral language in which Milton describes with sustained sweetness his school-friendship with King at Christ Church, Cambridge. Cf. —

"O, and is all forgot?
All schooldays' friendship, childhood innocence?
We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
Have with our needles created both one flower,
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
Both warbling of one song, both in one key;
As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds,
Had been incorporate. So we grew together,
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted;
But yet a union in partition,
Two lovely berries moulded on one stem:
So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart;
Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,
Due but to one, and crowned with one crest."

Shakespeare's Midsummer Night's Dream, Act iii., Scene 2, 205–215.

26. **Opening eyelids of the morn.** Cf. Job iii., 9.

32–33. Doubtless the undergraduate attempts of Milton and King; **oaten flute.** Cf. Shakespeare's song in Love's Labour's Lost.

"When daisies pied and violets blue."
Shakespeare's Love's Labour's Lost, Act v., Scene 2.

36. **Damoetas.** A pastoral name recurring in the classical poets. Various authors have interpreted it as referring here to one of Mil-

ton's tutors or some Fellow of Christ Church who had encouraged the youthful attempts of Milton and King.

39–44. **Thee, shepherd . . . thy soft lays.** Milton follows closely here the mourning for Orpheus, as described in Ovid, Metamorphoses, XI.

41. **And all their echoes mourn.** Cf. the joyous echoes of Spenser's Epithalamium; also —

> "Lost Echo sits among the voiceless mountains
> And feeds her grief with his remembered lay."
>
> *Shelley's Adonais.*

50–55. **Where were ye . . . wisard stream.** This passage follows closely the first Idyll of Theocritus, 66–69, and the tenth Eclogue of Virgil, 9–12, with the substitution of an English environment suited to the tragedy.

52–53. **On the steep . . . lie.** A mountain in Caernarvon celebrated as a burial-place of the Druids.

54. **Mona.** The highest portion of the island of Anglesey, but Mona is not high.

55. **Deva.** The river Dee, sung by Spenser, Milton, Drayton, Kingsley, and others.

59–63. **What could the Muse herself . . . the Lesbian shore?** The student is referred for this familiar story to Ovid's Metamorphoses, XI., 1-55, and to Paradise Lost, Book VII., 32–39; also to any classical dictionary.

63. **Swift Hebrus.** Probably borrowed from Virgil's "Volucrem Hebrum," as the Hebrus flow slowly.

64–84. This passage affords the instructor an excellent opportunity to note the decline of poetry as the Restoration was approached, and the quick sensitiveness of Milton to see and deplore it. "The poets who were alive at this date were such as Wither, Herrick, Shirley, May, Davenant, Suckling, and Crashaw." —*Bell.*

66–69. **Amaryllis . . . Næra's.** Fanciful pastoral names to suggest either the allurements of a life of pleasure or a sort of poetry without virility, probably the latter.

70–73. This passage now famous has been expressed by various writers before Milton, but is rarely quoted except from him, illustrating —

> "Tho' old the thought or oft expressed,
> 'Tis his at last that says it best."

Cf. "I will not deny his appetite for glory which generous minds do ever latest part from." — *Sir H. Wotton.*

75. **Comes the blind Fury.** Milton, who rarely errs in this respect, now cites not a Fury, but the Fate, Atropos.

77. **Phœbus.** Phœbus Apollo, the god of song.

79. **Glist'ring foil.** An allusion to the practice of placing foil under gems to enhance their brightness.

85. **Arethuse.** The famous Sicilian fountain in the island of Ortygia, haunted by the pastoral Muse.

86. **Smooth-sliding Mincius.** A tributary river to the Po, near which Virgil was born.

88. **My oat.** My gift for writing pastorals.

89. **Herald of the sea.** Triton, the son of Neptune, who, in his name, asks the cause of this untimely death.

> "Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea,
> Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn."
> *Wordsworth's Sonnets.*

96. **Hippotades.** The son of Hippotes, Æolus, king of the winds.

99. **Sleek Panope . . . sisters.** The Nereides, whose haunt was the Mediterranean.

101. **Built in the eclipse.** It has always been a popular superstition that anything accomplished in an eclipse is doomed to disaster.

> "Slips of yew,
> Slivered in the moon's eclipse."
> *Witches Songs in Macbeth*, iv., 1.

103. **Camus.** The personification of Cambridge University on the Cam, lamenting her son. This reverent allusion should tend to disabuse the mind of a notion held by a few, that Milton cared little for his Alma Mater.

104–106. The costuming of the genius of the river is somewhat involved in imaginative appropriateness, in order to inweave the well-known legend of Hyacinthus. See Classical Dictionary.

109. **The Pilot of the Galilean Lake.** St. Peter, in his function assigned him in St. Matt. xvi., 19. Ruskin has a famous treatment of this entire passage (108–131) in Sesame and Lilies, Lecture I.

110. **Two massy keys.** There is no Scriptural authority for "two," but ecclesiastical tradition refers usually to two.

112. **Mitred locks.** An allusion to St. Peter as the first Bishop of the Christian church.

113–131. In this famous passage is seen the prophecy of the Milton of the days of the Commonwealth. Already his indignation against the rule of Archbishop Laud causes him to forget for the moment the subject of his elegy, while he inveighs against the state of the Church. As a study of contemptuous phrase, it is without equal; as a study of the clergy of Milton's time, it is a chapter in history. Cf. Chaucer's Persoun in the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales.

119. **Blind mouths!** A striking mixed figure to illustrate the greed of the clergy. Cf. Sonnet, xvi., 14.

122. **They are sped.** They flourish.

124. **Grate on their scrannel pipes.** This expression admirably describes the thin, effectless character of the sermons of this period.

126. **But, swoln with wind.** Cf. Hosea, xii., 1.

128. **Grim wolf.** Church of Rome, to which there were daily accessions from the Protestant Church. Acts xx., 29.

130. **Two handed engine.** That which must be wielded with both hands. For prolonged discussion, see Masson's Milton, vol. iii., pp. 454–456.

132. **Alpheus.** The poem now returns to its subject. Alpheus was the river-god who loved Arethusa.

135–151. "The most exquisite flower and colour passage in all Milton's poetry." — *Masson.* Cf. Cymbeline, iv., 2, Winter's Tale, iv., 3, for flower studies from Shakespeare.

Ruskin has a fine comparison of the use of flowers by Shakespeare and Milton in Modern Painters, vol. iii., p. 160.

138. **The swart-star.** Sirius, or Canicula, the dog-star.

151. **Laureate hearse.** Originally, and as here used, a construction above the tomb to hold the candles.

152. **For so.** In this manner.

158. **Monstrous.** The sea-depths peopled with monsters.

160. **Bellerus.** A word coined by Milton for a Cornish giant inhabiting Land End, whose early name was Bellerium.

161. **The guarded mount.** St. Michael's Mount, on which there is a crag called St. Michael's chair. Milton refers to the story of the vision of the saint on this mount.

162. **Namancos and Bayona's hold.** Towns on the Gallician shore in Spain.

163. **Angel.** St. Michael, not Lycidas.

164. **Dolphins.** The dolphin was fabled to carry Arion, the Greek musician whom the mariners threw into the sea, safely to shore.

166. **Your sorrow.** i.e., Lycidas. Cf.—

> "Our love, our hope, our sorrow is not dead."
>
> *Shelley's Adonais.*

176. **Unexpressive.** Inexpressible.

> "With unexpressive notes to heaven's newborn heir,"
>
> *Ode on the Nativity.*

> "The fair the chaste, the unexpressive she."
>
> *As You Like It*, Act iii., Scene 2.

> "To-morrow shall ye feast in pastures new."
>
> *Fletcher's Purple Island*, vi., 77.

Nuptial Song. See Rev. xix., 6–7.

189. **Doric lay.** An allusion to the Doric dialect in which Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus sang.

It is to be noted that the last eight lines form a double stanza of exquisite beauty, a poem in itself.

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